

A History Of The Christian Church In The South



By
Durward T. Stokes
and
William T. Scott



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Foreword and Dedication

For more than a century and a quarter, members of the southern Christian Church were often erroneously identified with the Disciples of Christ, with "Campbellites", or with the Christian Church in the northern and western United States. They were also frequently asked why they had no denominational name but Christian, and requested to explain why they subscribed to no specific creed. Actually, the Church grew slowly from its founding in 1794 and while its membership spread throughout the South in general, its greatest strength by far was in North Carolina and Virginia. Small in numbers, it founded a college and an orphanage which are both thriving institutions today, and often it exerted an influence where it existed far in excess of its numerical strength. In 1931, after a merger with the Congregationalists, the southern Christian Church ceased to exist as a separate organization. Many efforts to write the history of the Church were thwarted from time to time and it appeared that the role of this denomination in the history of southern religious development would eventually be forgotten.

No member of the Church realized this possibility more than William Tate Scott who not only dedicated his life to the Christian ministry but also filled positions of the highest responsibility in the administration of the organization. He repeatedly urged and pled that the story of the Church be commemorated in writing and finally accepted the assignment of performing the task himself rather than allow the project to be abandoned. Scott's failing health forced him to request the assistance of a collaborator and, though he did not live to see the manuscript completed, he never swerved from his goal and never lost hope in the enterprise. The history has now been written, but had it not been for dogged determination of the energetic minister through years of research, cataloguing data, and promoting interest in historical matters, the story might never have been told. Often he labored while racked with pain and often he encountered discouragement on every side, but he persevered, and his goal has been won. No tribute can be too great to pay William Tate Scott for his accomplishment, and this gratitude must necessarily include his wife, Della Cotten Scott, whose assistance and encouragement were invaluable. In acknowledgement of the unpaid debt, this history is dedicated to the Glory of God in memory of William Tate Scott and to the men and women who persevered through generations to develop and preserve the southern Christian Church as an organization through which each could serve God and his fellow man according to the dictates of his own conscience.



Selected Churches

Upper left Damascus

Upper right Apples Chapel

Center O'Kelly Chapel

Lower left Providence

Lower right Pleasant Hill

Preface

The Southern Christian Church was an integral part of the development of religion in the United States from the post-Revolutionary period until 1931 when it became a part of the Congregational Christian Church and ceased to exist as a separate denomination. Its identity was further submerged in 1957 when it was enveloped in the newly organized United Church of Christ. The Southern Christian Convention, which was the central governing body of this Church for many years, was keenly aware that the history of the denomination should be preserved as a significant part of the story of religion in America; but despite its repeated attempts to have the history compiled, it was still unwritten in 1966.

On March 29th of that year action was finally begun. A Committee on Southern Convention History composed of Clyde L. Fields, chairman; William T. Scott, secretary; J. Earl Danieleley, treasurer; James H. Overton and Mesdames Mark Andes and Oma U. Johnson, members, commissioned its secretary to begin work on the project. Because of his long years of service in the ministry and administrative positions in the Christian and Congregational Christian Churches, Scott was eminently qualified for the task, and for several years he collected and annotated a voluminous amount of data. However, increasingly impaired health interfered with his efforts to such an extent that he requested assistance to complete the project.

In September 1971 I met with the Committee by request and agreed to collaborate with the secretary in writing the book. Scott and I were old friends and worked in perfect harmony so that I was able to complete most of the research and begin the manuscript by February 1972. The initial draft of the first five chapters had been written when Scott died on July 17 of that year. The completion of this history was the cherished dream of my colleague whose last words to me were, "This story must be written. Carry on!", and in obedience to that charge I have completed the book.

The purpose of this history has not been to glorify the southern Christian Church or any individual or group of individuals among its clergy and membership. Credit has been given where credit was due, but no attempt has been made to belittle or ignore errors or defects; and, the Church being an institution composed of human beings, there were naturally some of both. The main purpose has been to show what the Christians accomplished and to picture the laborious process necessary to attain their goals. The activities of this Church touched the political, social, and intellectual life, in addition to religious affairs in the geographical area where it existed, and only the high-

lights of each could be included in this account. Individual ministers, local churches, and area conferences could only be mentioned for the part they played in the overall story. Each church and conference has a history of its own and many individuals merit a full biography, but these are subjects for separate treatment apart from this account. Scott and I were in full agreement that this history should strictly conform to the known facts, and to accomplish this aim every possible means was exerted to uncover all data in existence pertinent to the subject. I accept full responsibility for any proven errors in the account.

Widespread research was conducted not only in the southern states, particularly North Carolina and Virginia, but throughout the United States in general; and personal investigations were made in both England and Ireland. It is beyond my means to list the many librarians, archivists, and their assistants who courteously rendered invaluable aid in conducting the research, but an especial note of gratitude is due to Mrs. Oma U. Johnson, Librarian of the Historical Society and Curator of the Church History Room at Elon College, and to Theodore E. Perkins and Guy Lambert, Librarian and Assistant Librarian respectively at Elon College, for their untiring assistance throughout the entire project. Grateful appreciation is also extended to Mrs. Evelyn Vradenburgh of the Congregational Library in Boston, Massachusetts; Kenneth E. Rowe of Drew University library in Madison, New Jersey; Edwin A. Schell of Lovely Lane Museum in Baltimore, Maryland; Harvey Arnold of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago library; Michael F. Plunkett of the University of Virginia library; Otis Cofield of the Atlantic Christian College library; Mattie Russell of the Duke University library; Susan Abney Haddock and Frank W. Robert of the Vanderbilt University library; William S. Powell of the North Carolina Collection in the University of North Carolina library at Chapel Hill; and Mrs. Carolyn Wallace and J. Isaac Copeland of the Southern Historical Collection, also at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The Honorable Thad Eure, Secretary of State for North Carolina, personally combed the files of his office for pertinent material; and George W. Troxler and Robert W. Delp, both of the Elon College faculty, aided in a variety of ways, including assisting in the London research and supplying data on the Evangelical and Reformed Church. James H. Overton read the entire manuscript for editorial comments, and various portions of it were read by Miss Lucy M. Eldredge; Mesdames T. H. Mackintosh, W. E. Wisseman, John G. Truitt, and F. C. Lester; J. Earl Danieleley, H. Shelton Smith, William M. Lake, F. C. Lester, John G. Truitt, James H. Lightbourne, Sr., Clyde L. Fields, and James H. Lightbourne, Jr. Mrs. Kathleen Goodwin was the typist; Mrs. Mary Elizabeth McCauley and Mrs. Emma D. Lewis assisted in the proofreading of the manuscript.

Without the cordial cooperation of Dean Theo Strum and the willing compliance of the Department of Social Studies at Elon College in making schedule arrangements to allow time for me to work on the book, the completion at this date would have been impossible. The administration of the College also facilitated the project by supplying office space, general supplies, copying service, and occasional student assistance. Both James H. Lightbourne, Jr. and Clyde L. Fields of the Southern Conference Office of the United Church of Christ frequently furnished valued material from the files in their custody. The cooperation of the Committee on Southern Convention History was understandably extended at all times. Dozens of interested people contributed information of various kinds, and it is regrettable that space will not permit the listing of their names here.

The assistance and encouragement of Mrs. Della Cotten Scott throughout the project and the service of William T. Scott, Jr., in sorting and arranging the papers of his father's files were of great benefit. My wife, Enita Nicks Stokes, personally aided me in a large part of the research and read the manuscript as it was written. Without all of these appreciated contributions the history could not have been written.

Durward T. Stokes

Elon College
March 21, 1973



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Union Ridge Christian Church
Upper left 1954
Upper right 1815
Lower left 1827
Lower right 1908

Introduction

As the Christian Church became a formal organization man's quest for power and his desire to rule became involved in the development of its governmental system. Patterned after the basic structure of the Roman Empire, the ecclesiastical hierarchy which evolved became a political as well as a religious body. Temporal authority and wealth were added to the rising prestige of the bishops. After the Pope was established as the head of the Church, rivalry grew between the Papacy and the Crown over the authority to appoint the bishops and thereby dominate the affairs of Christendom.

During the long period between the fall of Rome and the Renaissance, this contest continued and was occasionally marked by such conspicuous events as that of an emperor being forced to stand in the snow at Canossa because of his defiance of Pope Gregory VII. This quarrel over investiture ebbed under Pope Innocent III and flowed under less astute occupants of the throne of St. Peter. The Babylonian Captivity of the papacy weakened the position of the Church, whereas the councils of Trent and Constance strengthened it. The disintegration of Charlemagne's kingdom weakened the royal authority, and the later rise of the national states strengthened the monarchy. The common man, occupied with the pressing problem of maintaining actual physical existence, had nothing to do with the struggle between cross and Crown over the right of investiture or the government of the Church. The Protestant Reformation failed to settle the dispute, and the bloody Thirty Years' War which followed Luther's reforms was based to a greater extent on the competition for temporal power than for Christian evangelism. The true mission of the Church had long been overshadowed by the fight to rule the Church. Princely ambitions and papal stubbornness caused an horrendous sacrifice of the lives and property of the common man in this attempt to control the Christian Church in Europe.

In 1170 the clash over authority between monarch and priest was marked in England by the brutal murder of Thomas Becket during his dispute with King Henry II. Over three centuries later Henry VIII established the Church of England under the jurisdiction of the Crown after he severed relations with the Papacy. Opposition to this action was strong on the part of the Anglo-Catholics, who refused to leave the Roman Church, and later on the part of Puritan Dissenters, who disapproved of the Anglican practices. Meanwhile, John Knox spread the teachings of John Calvin throughout Scotland; George Fox organized the Society of Friends; and the common man began

to realize that he was a human being and as such was entitled to moral and political rights of his own. The Enlightenment further encouraged the ordinary people in general to think for themselves and to strive for greater independence. Gradually they began to conceive of the Church as a haven of comfort and joy, and their superstitious fear of its power began to diminish.

When the American colonies of Great Britain were settled, each religious sect brought to the New World its church organization and government as it had existed in the mother country. The Presbyterians had their presbyteries and synods; the Baptists their associations; the German Reformed and Lutherans their classes and synods; the Quakers their quarterly and yearly meetings; and the Congregationalists had their congregational meetings and conferences. Church government was not a particularly difficult problem for the Dissenters. However, the Church of England, being episcopal and technically the state church, was under the authority of the Crown, and supervision over the colonial Anglicans was delegated by the King to the Bishop of London. Despite repeated requests for a resident American bishop, this authority was never changed, and throughout the colonial period the affairs of the Church of England in America were directed from Fulham Palace in London. As a result, a native American could not enter the Anglican priesthood without visiting England for ordination by a bishop, and few were able to comply with this difficult requirement. Consequently, most of the spiritual activities of the Church in the provinces were conducted by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. This organization of laymen had the approval of the bishop, and through its headquarters in London induced many ministers to locate in America by guaranteeing the payment of their salaries. Many of these missionaries were unpopular and ineffective, however, either because of their personalities or their attitudes; and the Church of England flourished in only a few sections in America.

This was the situation in the British provinces when John Wesley, assisted by his brother Charles, organized the Methodist Societies in England as evangelistic groups within the Church of England. Dedicated to an increased emphasis on the practice of Christian piety, members were received into the societies upon the condition that they abide by the Rules of Discipline drawn up by Wesley. Suitable candidates who demonstrated their sincere faith and manifested their ability to bear witness were designated by the Conference as lay preachers on trial. After proving themselves, they were made itinerant evangelists. These traveling preachers met with the membership of the societies in classes, discussed the Discipline with them, engaged in love feasts, and had the authority to admit new members or expel old ones who had violated the rules. They were privileged to preach to all who would listen to them, whether members of the so-

cieties or not, but they had no authority to administer the sacraments as this was the prerogative of ordained priests of the Church of England. In America it was necessary for the Methodists to receive the sacraments from an Anglican clergyman when they met for that rite, and some of the state clergy cooperated willingly with the societies, while others resented and opposed them.

In 1736 Wesley made a voyage to America, and shortly afterwards George Whitefield toured the provinces several times on evangelistic missions. By 1760 Robert Strawbridge and Philip Embury began organizing Methodist societies in America, and in 1769 Wesley dispatched Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor as the first official missionaries of Methodism. In 1771 Richard Wright and Francis Asbury were sent on a similar mission, and the next year Asbury served as General Assistant in the affairs of the societies; he was replaced in that office in 1773 by Thomas Rankin. American-born converts to Methodism began to qualify as preachers and were added to the itinerant ministry, and membership in the societies increased. Devereux Jarratt, an Anglican divine in Virginia, who was enthusiastic over Methodism as long as it remained a movement within the Church of England, assisted the followers of Wesley in every manner possible. Many other clergymen of the Established Church proved less cooperative.

This advancing Christian movement was suddenly checked when the outbreak of the American Revolution interrupted American affairs. John Wesley was sorely perplexed by this new problem, for he never wavered in his loyalty to the British Crown, and he consequently ordered the Methodists to refrain from any participation in the patriot movement. Finding themselves in increasingly embarrassing and ineffective positions, practically all of the English-born Methodist preachers returned to England to await the outcome of the war, and many of the Anglican clergy made similar moves. Of the Methodist officials sent out by Wesley only Francis Asbury remained in America, and he was forced into semi-seclusion. The native-born Methodist preachers attempted to continue their evangelistic program, but they faced the seemingly insoluble problem of making converts to societies within a church which existed only in name in the American provinces. Consequently, there was no authorized clergy to administer the sacraments, which were a vital part of their religious program, and the Methodists had no church government other than the orders of Wesley to direct their affairs. Of the numerous religious denominations and groups in America only the Methodists had their government vitally affected by the Revolution, and they were in a serious dilemma. With characteristic zeal they attacked the problem when it arose, and it was during the search for a solution that the history of the organization known as the southern Christian Church began.

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Chapter I

James O'Kelly and the Methodists

In 1773 Thomas Rankin arrived in America to serve as a general assistant to John Wesley in supervising the Methodist societies in the British colonies. During the ensuing five years, aided by Francis Asbury and others, he met annually with the preachers in conference and assigned to each itinerant a geographical area, or circuit, as his evangelistic area for a year. While thus assembled, the Methodists also discussed their Discipline and transacted any necessary business. Preachers were either returned to their former circuits for another year or dispatched to entirely new ones. When a request was granted to be excused from traveling, the applicant simply became a local Methodist preacher without vote in the conferences. Announcing their arrival in advance, the hardy zealots endured severe physical hardships and sometimes actual danger in order to arrive at the appointed place and preach to whatever group assembled to hear them. Sometimes a church building was available; otherwise, they met in private homes or in the open air. The circuit riders also met with the classes of the societies and conducted their affairs. Although Asbury resented Rankin's authority, the itinerant system was generally successful and the number of converts increased. In 1775, a year marked by a spiritual revival in southern Virginia, James O'Kelly joined the Methodists in that state and dedicated his life to Christian evangelism.¹

Little is known about the new convert prior to his acceptance of Methodism. Born some time before 1741, the strongest evidence indicates Virginia as his birthplace. Once he referred to that province as "my native country," and he also called himself "a Son of America."² His background was assuredly Irish, as suggested by his name, and Wilbur Ernest MacClenny, his principal biographer, favored the Emerald Isle as the place of O'Kelly's nativity, though he later re-

nounced that theory.³ The reported date of his marriage to Elizabeth Meeks was June 25, 1759, and the couple were known to be residents of Mecklenburg County, Virginia, in 1785. Two years later O'Kelly was listed as a home owner in the same county. About 1797 the O'Kellys moved to Chatham County, North Carolina, where the preacher died October 16, 1826.⁴ There is positive evidence of two sons, John and William, though the couple may have had other children. John apparently became a farmer of little distinction, while William was attracted to public life and represented Chatham County in the North Carolina legislature in 1805 and in four later sessions. Elected to the State Senate in 1818, he was still holding that office when he died in 1820. Little is known of John's family, but William left many known descendants.⁵

No evidence has been found to prove that James O'Kelly ever attended a college or university, but it is obvious he received about as much training as the educational advantages of the time made available to the average man. That his learning was limited was virtually confirmed by the preacher when he referred to Francis Asbury as "an utter stranger to a classical education, being like me born of poor parentage."⁶ Regardless of scholastic handicaps, the Virginia Methodist was keenly interested in writing and became the author of numerous publications, though his literary ability was not of the highest caliber. However, though he encountered obstacles in using his pen, O'Kelly seemed to meet none whatsoever in preaching, and it was in the pulpit that he excelled. Possessed of all the fervor and initiative characteristic of both his Irish temperament and American spirit, he became a preacher of great power and popularity. He began his exhortations in an Anglican church in southern Virginia, where:

The parish minister was greatly enraged that an upstart Methodist preacher should have the temerity to preach in his chapel; and what was worse, that he should attract more people than the regular 'successor of the apostles!' . . . In spite of the curate's opposition, he continued to preach in the chapel for more than a year, with increasing success.⁷

James O'Kelly's name first appeared in the records of the Virginia Methodist Conference in 1778 as a minister on trial.⁸ At that time he was assigned to the New Hope Circuit in North Carolina to assist Beverly Allen, who appraised his progress:

During the winter we had a considerable work in the Circuit; for Brother *James O'Kelly* travelled as my Assistant, whose labours were greatly owned of God; numbers joined our Society, and many professed faith in the Redeemer.⁹

Meanwhile, the American Revolution had increased in intensity with the result that the Church of England had practically ceased to exist

in the former British provinces. There were almost no authorized clergymen to administer the sacraments, and in the very Conference of 1778 when O'Kelly's name first appeared the Methodist preachers seriously discussed assuming the authority to perform the sacramental function, although definite action was postponed. It was significant that at almost the very moment when James O'Kelly became a Methodist the societies were faced with a major problem which became a controversial issue.

In 1779 the Virginia Conference assembled at Brokenback Chapel, in Fluvanna County, and O'Kelly was again assigned to the New Hope Circuit. Deliberations were resumed on the unsettled problem of the sacraments, and as the need was desperate to perform that function for the members of the societies, the itinerants decided that they had the right to rely on their own initiative. The Church of England was no longer active in their country, and they did not believe it would revive. There had been no superintendent appointed by Wesley to replace Rankin, who had returned to England, and the southern Methodists felt that they had no authorized leader in America to deal with the matter. After prayerful and serious discussion, the Conference appointed a committee of the preachers to act as a presbytery, authorized to administer the sacraments and to ordain ministers. The mode of baptism to be used was optional. Of the eighteen preachers who approved this move James O'Kelly was one, as was Nelson Reed who made this comment:

. . . there was a great majority for it O what a soul rending time
it was many herts [sic] did Tremble many tears was shed and
many prayers made to god . . .¹⁰

In a spirit typically American, the southern Methodists showed their self-reliance when faced with an emergency, and they dealt with the situation to their own conscientious satisfaction. Happy in the thought that they could now completely care for the spiritual needs of the societies, the travelers returned to their circuits with renewed zeal.

When Francis Asbury learned of the results of the Fluvanna meeting, he vehemently disapproved of what he considered an unwarranted assumption on the part of the preachers. At the request of a Methodist assembly in Delaware, Asbury had assumed the leadership of the societies, pending instructions from Wesley, and he called for a conference to meet at Lovely Lane Chapel in Baltimore on April 24, 1780. The fifteen preachers in attendance, most of whom were from the north, upheld Asbury's opinion, and Freeborn Garrettson and William Watters were deputed to serve with him as a committee to inform the southern preachers that they could no longer be connected with John Wesley unless their actions were suspended for one year. Thus a minority group from one section condemned the

action of a majority group from another, and the northerners virtually dismissed the southerners from the Methodist fellowship.¹¹ The Virginia Conference met at Manakintown the next month where the ultimatum was delivered and the issue argued at length without any agreement. Finally, O'Kelly and John Dickins together proposed that an appeal be made to Wesley for a decision and that the ordinances be suspended until he made his ruling.¹² The perplexed Founder of Methodism, while evidently approving the suspension, did not make a decisive reply until hostilities ceased and the Americans had won the war. Meanwhile, O'Kelly, though chagrined at Asbury's rebuff, applied himself diligently to his assignment on the Tar River Circuit. In July 1780, Asbury joined him and, finding that he "appeared to be a warm-hearted man," recorded:

James O'Kelly and myself enjoyed and comforted each other; this dear man arose at midnight, and prayed very devoutly for me and himself. He cries, give me children or I die; . . .¹³

All seemed harmonious between the two, though both were troubled over the indifference to religion in Virginia.

Respecting the command of Wesley, who disapproved of the American Revolution, O'Kelly attempted to remain clear of hostilities, but when the war enveloped him despite his intentions, he possessed too much American spirit and Irish courage to submit docilely to persecution indefinitely. He was robbed, falsely accused, half starved, twice captured, and generally mistreated by the forces representing Great Britain. On one occasion he was tied to a tree during a skirmish and his life was in considerable danger. Small wonder he relied upon his own conscience and cast his lot with the Patriots. "I stood my draft as other men. Once my substitute faithfully served a tour. Twice I marched on foot as far as I was able," he related.¹⁴ The preacher concluded that political independence was the Christian's right, and he contributed his efforts to the struggle to achieve it.

Although Wesley did not appoint him a joint superintendent until 1784, Francis Asbury considered himself responsible for the supervision of the American itinerants after Rankin returned to England. Attempting to combat the growing dissatisfaction in the South over the question of the sacraments, he requested the preachers in attendance at the 1780 Conference to sign a statement agreeing to continue their evangelism according to Wesley's original plan. James O'Kelly was not one of the twenty-four signers. The following year a more specific compact was proposed to the Conference:

What preachers are now determined, after mature consideration, close observation, and earnest prayer, to preach the old Methodist doctrine, and strictly enforce the discipline, as contained in the Notes, Sermons, and Minutes published by Mr. Wesley, as far

as they respect both preachers and people, according to the knowledge we have of them, and the ability of God shall give; and firmly resolved to discountenance a separation among either preachers or people?¹⁵

Thirty-nine preachers signed that agreement, but again O'Kelly was not one of them. The Virginia circuit rider may not even have been present, for he was not assigned a station nor otherwise mentioned in the Minutes.¹⁶ Asbury communicated with him afterwards and noted with satisfaction, "I obtained the promise of brothers P. Bruce and O'Kelly to join heartily in our connexion."¹⁷ Nevertheless, James O'Kelly had neither signed nor subscribed to anything contrary to his conviction in the rights of the preachers to inaugurate governmental action in the societies.

By 1784 it became quite clear that England and her rebellious colonies had irrevocably separated, and Wesley realized that he could no longer postpone definite instructions to the American Methodists. Accordingly, he delegated Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury to serve as Joint Superintendents, and assigned Thomas Vasey and Richard Whatcoat to assist them. Thus clothed with official authority for the first time since Rankin's retirement, the astute Asbury summoned the preachers to a general conference in 1784 to greet Wesley's emissaries and receive his message. The Methodists convened in Baltimore at the so-called "Christmas Conference," and heard the explicit instructions of their Founder, which explained:

"2. Lord King's account of the primitive church convinced me, many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and, consequently, have the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our travelling preachers, but I have still refused, not only for peace' sake, but because I was determined as little as possible to violate the established order of the national Church to which I belonged.

"3. But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, and but a few parish ministers; . . . Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man's right by appointing and sending labourers into the harvest.

Wesley then named the superintendents and elders he had authorized to baptize and administer the sacraments, and concluded:

"As our American brethren are now totally disentangled from both the state and from the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free."¹⁸

The Conference then organized and founded the Methodist Episcopal Church, whose officials would be deacons, elders, and bishops. Asbury was ordained a bishop, while James O'Kelly and his fellow ministers received ordination as elders. The latter was also made a presiding elder, and assigned to the supervision of seven itinerants in Virginia and North Carolina circuits. Although O'Kelly later stated, "The term Episcopacy did not set well on the minds of some,"¹⁹ the controversy over the sacraments had been settled, and he plunged energetically into his new responsibility and successfully supervised the same district until 1792.

During the ensuing decade, James O'Kelly rose in stature and reputation as a Methodist preacher in the judgment of his contemporaries. Richard N. Venable observed that he was "a Methodist and a man of no small eloquence,"²⁰ while John Kobler appraised him as "a father of the Church of God and the work of the Ministry."²¹ James Meacham once accompanied the elder on his travels, and wrote:

I was truly glad and thankful to meet my dear old Bro. O'Kelly. He is like a dear father to me. We had a most precious time of it. His large diocese flourished generally.

The couple visited Williamsburg where "Bro. O'Kelly preached in the capitol to a numerous crowd of souls from John 1-11-12, and wept over them" and a few days later, "The Lord owned his words, I believe this night," wrote Meacham.²² Philip Gatch noted that the Virginia elder "for many years stood in the front rank," while Freeborn Garrettson considered him to be a man of power and influence, who was a valuable asset to Asbury.²³ Asbury, himself, reported to Wesley that he found "the labours of those two men of God, James O'Kelly and Joseph Cromwell, had been blest to the awakening and conversion of souls."²⁴ Another writer described the itinerant as "a popular Methodist preacher of original genius,"²⁵ while William McKendree commented in his diary on two occasions:

B. O'K preached shorely the greatest sermon that ever I heard—we had a good time the D. old man got all his bitter cups sweetened & his soul inflamed, Bless the Lord for such times as this.

. . . .

B. O'K preached and preaching it was. O! how happy my soul was. He reasoned the sinners quite out of themselves. Very few of the sinners eyes but what leaked. ²⁶

Proclaiming the gospel message was the chief joy in life of James O'Kelly, and even his most severe critics conceded that he was an influential preacher.

Slavery had always been condemned by the Methodists, and the Conference of 1785 had severely disapproved of the ownership of slaves by the clergy. In obedience to the rules of his Church, on March

5, 1785, O'Kelly dutifully manumitted the only one in his possession immediately. How he became the owner of such property is unknown, but the terms with which he freed his chattel provide an insight into his character:

... whereas almighty God has so disposed human events that I James O'Kelly of Mecklenburg county in the state of Virginia have now in my possession and hitherto have detained a slave dianna supposed to be about the age of thirty-five years and being conscious of the injustice and criminality of such detention do here by emancipate and set free the said Dianna declaring her intirely and fully discharged, without any interruption from me or mine and she be hereafter intituled to all the priviledges intended by the said act to slaves thus liberated to all extents and purposes and feeling myself deeply interested in her futer behavious and prosperity may God of his infinite goodness and mercy so dispose her heart as to enable her to pass thro this troublesom & impetuous world with tranquility and so in the fear and love of God that she may have Eternal life in the world to come. . .²⁷

Diana remained in the O'Kelly household after her emancipation, probably as a paid servant, and was liberally provided for in the will of Mrs. O'Kelly, who died in 1833.²⁸ Consistent with the action, regardless of what his sentiments on the subject may formerly have been, the elder remained a staunch foe of slavery during the remainder of his life. He enjoyed expressing his convictions in writing, and his first publication was a protest against the institution.²⁹ Francis Asbury was impressed with O'Kelly's zealous antagonism to the growing institution, for in May of 1785 he wrote:

I found the minds of the people greatly agitated with our rules against slavery, and a proposed petition to the general assembly for the emancipation of the blacks. Colonel Bedford and Doctor Coke disputed on the subject, and the Colonel used some threats; next day, Brother O'Kelly let fly at them, and they were made angry enough; we however, came off with whole bones, and our business in conference was finished in peace.³⁰

The castigation delivered by Brother O'Kelly was assuredly a moving declamation, for the preacher was both fearless and forceful as a religious crusader.

The consuming passion in the life of James O'Kelly was the promotion of Christian evangelism as practiced by the Methodists, and the abolition of human slavery was a part of that goal. The number of harvesters supervised by O'Kelly was increasing in a field ripe with opportunity, and the clergyman did not intend for their efforts to be restricted in any way. The only cloud on his horizon was the developing governmental power in the new American church. O'Kelly was unhappy over the apparent belief of Asbury in the dominating power of the superintendent, because the Virginia clergyman actually pre-

ferred that the ministers be autonomous. To him, the function of a bishop was to direct rather than to dictate, but Asbury's concept was that he should rule as well as supervise.³¹ Elder O'Kelly advocated the payment of deepest respect to John Wesley as long as the Founder lived but he was firm in his opinion that an American church should be governed by Americans, not by Englishmen. He reasoned that the clergy on their home ground could grasp their situation far better than deputies from across the Atlantic, and others agreed with him. The uneasiness of the preacher came to the surface in 1787 when Wesley proposed that Richard Whatcoat be made joint superintendent with Asbury. O'Kelly expressed his sentiments in a letter to an unknown colleague:

. . . respecting the Sheep, whom we've begotten by the word; over whom, the Holy ghost hath made us (not the preachers in britain) members; I saw we cannot trust any man's opinion in matters so important without a Reasonable inference. When matters are thus confused & ideas comply, my counsel is to listen to the voice of Heaven . . .

After further comment, the author outlined his problem:

But what must we do? The Lord direct.

1. Does he look upon our country preachers to be men of so low breeding as no one fit to govern?
2. Or does he think that we are a Class of novices fond of popularity & so out of love to us aims to keep us out of the Snare of the Devil?
3. Or does our dear Father conclude that we are prone to Revolt—or what he may call Rebellion?
4. Or is there any political scheme in it? If all my propositions are groundless; the Lord deliver me from such Surmisings.

O'Kelly then affirmed his faith in the ministers, despite his uneasiness:

Let conference chuse, & if dear bro. Whatcoat is their choice well. For my part would gladly sit at Mr. Wesley's feet cleansing his boots, hearing his gracious words. But expecting his time in time to be short, & to give up both ends of the Staff—Who can tell what will follow?³²

Richard Whatcoat, partially due to O'Kelly's opposition, was not elevated in office by the Conference at that time, but the name of John Wesley was omitted from the roll in the Minutes. This affront to the Founder became a matter of heated controversy among the preachers and further strained the relations between Wesley and Asbury. The assumption of the title of "bishop" by the latter and the founding of Cokesbury College under his leadership brought forth an emphatic criticism from Wesley.³³ James O'Kelly felt that his misgivings were proving to be prophetic, and he rode through his district with a troubled mind and heart.

The problems of systematizing a fast growing church continued to multiply with the result that the number of annual conferences had necessarily increased to eleven by 1789, with the actions of the final meeting in Baltimore having superior jurisdiction to those previously held during the year. The burden placed upon the clergymen to attend these gatherings, while encumbered with their other duties and hampered by the inconveniences of eighteenth century travel, was becoming enormous. Bishop Asbury proposed as a solution the creation of a Council, composed of the bishop and the presiding elders, which would exercise the ultimate authority over the proceedings of the indispensable annual conferences. Authorization was obtained for a Council, but not by unanimous consent, as it was opposed by some of the churchmen who preferred to have the decisive power vested in a General Conference in which all of the preachers could participate. This latter plan appealed to James O'Kelly and his followers because they considered it the most democratic method of governing the Church. While this possibility was being debated among the Methodists, the Council held its first meeting and James O'Kelly attended as a member.³⁴

Opposition to the Council increased in intensity, and the Virginia elder either could not or would not attend the 1790 meeting. He communicated his objections to the bishop, who noted, "... he makes heavy complaint of my power, and bids me stop for one year, or he must use his influence against me."³⁵ Asbury replied to this complaint and proposed to sit in the Council as an ordinary member, "and, in that point, at least, waive the claims of episcopacy."³⁶ This failed to satisfy the foes of the plan, and O'Kelly decided the time was opportune either to restrict the powers of the bishop or to organize a different form of government. He communicated his ideas to Thomas Coke, who wrote an encouraging letter to him in 1791:

Methodism is gone. But remember when we meet together and overthrow the new institution (the Council) as I believe we shall, if Mr. Asbury is not satisfied with the government as it stood before, we will contend for a Republican government. Give me thy hand—fear not; I am a friend to America.³⁷

On May 4, 1791, Dr. Coke also composed a statement which was printed and circulated:

Five things we have in view. 1. The abolition of arbitrary aristocracy. 2. The investing of the nomination of the presiding elders in the conference of the districts. 3. The limitation of the districts to be invested in the general conference. 4. An appeal allowed each preacher on the reading of the stations. And 5. A general conference of at least two thirds of the preachers as a check upon every thing.

*But a good superintendent will not do the wrong you fear. I answer a good superintendent is but a man, and is fond of power. But a good superintendent may become a tyrant, or be succeeded by one. O stand up for liberty, be friends of mankind in all things.*³⁸

Little wonder that the Virginia elder felt that his argument was valid when it was abetted by one of the two bishops of the Church. Wesley died in that same year, and Asbury no longer had even a nominal superior. Being far too intelligent to ignore hopeless odds, he "acceded to a general conference, for the sake of peace," and later observed, "I received the olive-branch from Virginia. All is peace—it was obtained by a kind letter to me from O'Kelly."³⁹

The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church which met in Baltimore in November, 1792, was the result of the summons of Asbury. Knowledge of the details of the assembly are fragmentary, as the minutes have not been preserved. Partial accounts written afterwards and entries in diaries made at the time are practically the total evidence extant of that momentous gathering. Both Thomas Morrell and Richard Whatcoat noted that one hundred sixteen preachers were present; John Kobler recorded the number as only two less.⁴⁰ The ministers known to have been present were Francis Asbury, Thomas Coke, Richard Whatcoat, Thomas Ware, John Dickins, Freeborn Garrettson, Jesse Lee, William McKendree, Rice Haggard, James Meacham, Hope Hull, Richard Ivey, Richard Swift, Joseph Everett, Thomas Morrell, Nelson Reed, Henry Willis, Stephen Davis, John Robinson (Robertson), John Kobler, Ira Willis, John Allen, George Wells, and James O'Kelly. Ten others were designated only by initials in the account of James Meacham, but these have not been positively identified.⁴¹ The list includes many of the outstanding Methodist preachers in America, which was one testimony to the importance of the assembly.

O'Kelly, in the account which he later wrote, stated that the reason for which the Conference was called, as he and others understood it, was to decide whether to retain the Council or to change to some other system of government. It was clearly indicated before the assembly convened that some change in the laws of the Church would very likely be made, for not only were Bishop Coke, Jesse Lee, James O'Kelly, and others displeased, but even the affable Freeborn Garrettson, riding to Baltimore with Asbury, observed, "We had some close conversation on church government. On this subject there is not a perfect unanimity of sentiment."⁴² It was the purpose of the Bishop to keep the change from weakening his episcopal power, if possible, and it was the aim of the Virginia elder to curb the increase of that power if he could. Each man had a perfect right to support his convictions, and that is exactly what each did.

In his recollections, James O'Kelly related that upon his arrival in Baltimore he was appointed by Asbury to a committee, or privy council, to discuss the Discipline before the assembly began its sessions. During the meeting he was asked if he would promise to abide by the decisions of the Conference, and he refused on the grounds that he did not know what action might be taken by that body. He interpreted this proposal as an effort to divert him from his purpose, but he believed in his own ideas and was too much of a fighter to surrender his goal before the beginning of the battle. His confidence would have been even greater had he known that the Methodist preachers in England, in their Conference of 1792, had adopted a rule similar to the one he planned to propose. It seems certain that Dr. Coke possessed this information, and he may have informed Bishop Asbury, but it is extremely doubtful that O'Kelly knew it.⁴³

The Conference agreed on rules of procedure with little difficulty. Asbury had discarded his former plan, and would not allow the Council to be discussed. Dr. Coke appeared to have reversed himself, and supported his fellow bishop. The debate had many eager participants, but no concrete proposition was introduced. Handicapped by the loss of Coke's promised support, O'Kelly entered into the deliberations to express his personal convictions. He later described the event:

5 I then arose, and stood before the assembly with the New Testament of our Lord Jesus, in my hand,

6 And spake after this manner: Brethren, hearken unto me, put away all other books, and forms, and let this be the only *criterion*, and "that will satisfy me."

7 I thought the ministers of Christ, would unanimously agree to such a proposal. But alas, they opposed the motion!⁴⁴

The elder realized from that decision that he need entertain no hope of the Church abandoning the episcopal form of government, but even so the situation was far from hopeless. The Council was dead and was unlikely to be resurrected; the periodic General Conference was almost certain to be approved for the future. If only the episcopal power could be restrained and the preachers vested with more individual rights, all would be well. O'Kelly felt that he could accept those conditions, and to attain his goal he introduced a motion, "Let a preacher who thinks himself injured in his appointment, have an appeal to the district conference."⁴⁵

Bishop Asbury interpreted this proposal as a direct attack upon him. He therefore turned the presiding office over to Coke and absented himself from the deliberations, although he sent back a letter to the Conference which plainly revealed his opposition to a change in the rules, and he reappeared at the meetings from time to time. The spirited debate which followed was only arrested by the motion

of John Dickins to divide the question into two parts: 1. Shall the bishop appoint the preachers to the circuit; and, 2. Shall a preacher be allowed an appeal? This change was approved, and question number 1 passed unanimously.⁴⁶ Then the debate over question number 2 continued for two days, interrupted only by the Sabbath when the ministers either conducted or attended divine services in the city. James O'Kelly "preached to near two thousand souls from 'Lord increase our faith'," and Bishop Coke addressed a large congregation.⁴⁷

The Virginia elder was fighting for the rights of the individual itinerant, as he had always done. He insisted that the right of clergymen to some degree of choice in the field of missionary endeavor to which he was assigned was essential to the greatest success in the preaching of Christian piety to a people who did not particularly wish to hear it. To place a man in a circuit where he felt partially defeated before entering it was not his idea of the proper manner to achieve the best results. O'Kelly believed that the itinerants were more able than the bishop to judge the territory in which they would be most effective. This was simply a conclusion drawn from the fact that the enormous responsibilities of the episcopal office prevented the superintendent from being as well acquainted with both territories and the personal qualifications of the travelers as were their associates in the area, who met together at the District Conference. No reflection on the sagacity of the bishop was intended by this concept; the purpose was intended to aid him in reaping a more bountiful harvest from his laborers in the field. Many bitter recriminations and wounded feelings might have been avoided had the bishops and the elder arrived at a better understanding of their mutual goals.

The controversy culminated when the Conference reconvened on Monday. The proposed amendment was "ably defended by O'Kelly, Ivey, Hull, Garrettson, and Swift—and oppos'd by Reed, Willis, Morrell, Everett and others," observed William Colbert.⁴⁸ O'Kelly wrote, "William McKendree, with several more, did, with holy zeal, strive with me for liberty."⁴⁹ McKendree's zeal brought forth the statement, "It is an insult to my understanding and such tyrannical despotism that I cannot or will not submit to it."⁵⁰ Rice Haggard replied to a question by testifying that he had known of two itinerants injured by the appointments of the bishop, and this assertion brought forth the charge that the speaker had impeached Asbury.⁵¹ The enigmatical Coke appraised the discussion:

I had always entertained very high ideas of the piety and zeal of the American preachers, and of the considerable abilities of many: but I had no expectation, I confess, that the debates would be carried on in so very masterly a manner; so that on every ques-

tion of importance, the subject seemed to be considered in every possible light.⁵²

John Kobler felt that the deliberations far exceeded the limits of genial debate, for he commented:

I was struck with fear that some of the brethren was rather too warm, & by the relieving their arguments, was giving way to a false Zeal. Yet prayer was made without ceasing for union and harmony among us.⁵³

A more detailed account was made by Thomas Ware, who thought the proposition might have carried had it not been prosecuted so vigorously:

Some of them said that it was a shame for a man to *accept* of such a lordship, much more to *claim* it; and that they who would submit to this absolute dominion must forfeit all claims to freedom, and ought to have their ears bored through with an awl, and to be fastened to their master's door and become slaves for life. One said that to be denied such an appeal was an insult to his understanding, and a species of tyranny to which others might submit if they chose, but for his part he must be excused for saying he could not.⁵⁴

The fervor of the debaters had not been roused to such a pitch on the spur of the moment. Such invective was the unleashing of dissatisfaction long pent up during a series of clashes. It began in Virginia in 1779-80 with the dismissal of the preachers from the Methodist fellowship. The heat generated on that occasion increased from one event to another until it finally came to a boiling point in Baltimore. Undoubtedly, the debate was spirited for the issue was a serious matter to the champions of the proposal; but the arguments were finally concluded and the vote was taken. The motion was defeated by a majority, and James O'Kelly had lost his fight.

To many who attended the conclave the vote was probably the welcome conclusion of a tiresome altercation over one item on the conference agenda, but it was not so to the originator of the motion. To O'Kelly, the ancient disagreement over the power of the bishops had reared its head in the Methodist Church, and the episcopacy had triumphed. Thus, he was a member of a church whose government had long been objectionable to him, and which he had proved powerless to change. What should his future course be? He retired to his chambers after the meeting to make his decision.

According to his own account, the disappointed elder "spent great part of that night in groans and tears." His labors in the Methodist Church had been productive, for the ministers under his direction had risen to twenty-four, and the converts in his district had increased in proportion. Although their opinions had clashed, Bishop Asbury

had valued his services, promoted him, and entrusted him with serious responsibilities in the program of the Church. Many of O'Kelly's ministerial colleagues esteemed him highly, and some of them staunchly supported his views. O'Kelly was completely dedicated to Methodism, but he did not believe Wesley intended it to be governed by an increasingly autocratic episcopacy, and his unhappiness over the situation had reached the breaking point. "On the morrow I implored the God of heaven to give me understanding. I consulted my friends, and in the fear of God, resolved not to return to conference. 'O, Dort, Dort.'"⁵⁵

When the assembly met on Tuesday, a letter was read announcing the withdrawal from the Conference of the presiding elder from the Southern District of Virginia. The entire contents of O'Kelly's "mournful farewell" are unknown, but John Kobler described it in part:

The next morning when the Conference met here came in a letter, subscribed by Bro. O'Kelly which was his farewell to the Conference. Said he: "I am now giving way to the overflowings of a full heart that he was always afraid our Superintendents was on a stretch [this word partially defaced] for power, and what has took place in the night before had established him in his opinion. This breach gave a sudden Shock to the whole body and every member I believe bore its part; tears flowed from every face."⁵⁶

It was an unhappy time although some of the ministers were less impressed, for George Wells laconically noted, "Bror O'Keyly sent us a janeruell [general] letter I fear he is a man possesst with a divisive spirit."⁵⁷

A majority of the clerics viewed the withdrawal seriously, for the Conference appointed a committee to attempt a reconciliation. Meacham left an interesting account of the matter:

A committee of three elders was chosen. Bro. F. G., Bro. T. B., and Bro. R. S., to visit him to try and prevail with him to come into Conference again, but could not. He was pointedly opposed to the Bishop having that power contended for. It went against him and he has taken his farewell of Conference. I think my poor heart scarcely ever felt the like before. I hope God will still direct aright, and give us our dear old Bro. and good fellow back again. If he comes not back I fear bad consequences will accrue.⁵⁸

Freeborn Garrettson, the one member of the committee who can be positively identified, related:

Two persons were appointed with me as a committee to treat with him. Many tears were shed, but we were not able to reconcile him to the decision of the conference. The wound was deep, and apparently incurable.⁵⁹

Thomas Coke also tried to soothe matters and, after an interchange of correspondence, personally called on the elder. The Bishop was per-

haps not the most effective emissary, as O'Kelly felt that Coke had dealt treacherously with him. If Freeborn Garrettson, who had agreed with the Virginian's motion, could not persuade him to change, certainly Thomas Coke had little hope of doing so, and he failed. To yield in an argument without conviction would have been merely a concession unwillingly made; to agree to a decision that violated his own conscience would have been a sin; and since O'Kelly could not do one without the other, he refused both.⁶⁰

Since nothing remained for O'Kelly to accomplish in Baltimore, he departed on his horse for home, accompanied by several of the preachers. According to his account, Rice Haggard and John Robinson were members of the group. Other sources name William McKendree and John Allen among his traveling companions, and Meacham designated an unidentified "I.W."⁶¹ James O'Kelly had left the Conference, but he had not formally quitted the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was uncertain as to what course he would have to follow. He was still grieved, hurt, and puzzled, as he testified when he later related a conversation while enroute to Virginia:

14 John asked me what I thought of doing; My answer was, I must preach the gospel, wherever a door is opened, &c. "But I have no intention of a separate party."

15 My brother answered and said, suppose souls are converted to God, through your instrumentality, and they ask your advice, what counsel will you give,

16 I answered him again, after this manner; perhaps I should advise to join the Methodists, rather than live out of society.

17 Alas said he, will you advise others to subscribe to a government that you believe is quite destitute of Divine Authority? I knew not what to answer.⁶²

And thus contemplating their plight, the bewildered horsemen jogged unhappily onward toward Virginia.

Footnotes

- ¹ Wilbur Ernest MacClenny, *The Life of Rev. James O'Kelly*, (Raleigh, North Carolina: Edwards and Broughton, 1910), 22. Hereinafter cited as MacClenny, *O'Kelly*. After his death O'Kelly's papers were destroyed by his wife, and his autobiography was lost when the O'Kelly home was burned during the Civil War.
- ² James O'Kelly, *Essay on Negro Slavery*, (Philadelphia: Printed by Richard Hall, 1787), 19. Hereinafter cited as O'Kelly, *Slavery*. See James O'Kelly, *A vindication of the Author's Apology, with Reflections on the Reply, and a Few Remarks on Bishop Asbury's Annotations on His Book of Discipline*, (Raleigh: Joseph Gales, 1801), 61. Hereinafter cited as O'Kelly, *Vindication*. See also Edward Dromgoole to Nicholas Snethen, February 24, 1802, in the Bruce Cotten Collection, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Hereinafter cited as Dromgoole, *Papers*. The writer of this letter referred to Bishop Madison, of Virginia, as O'Kelly's "Country Man," and also wrote, "If Mr. O'Kelly had been born in Europe and had by choice made this his country. . ." Both statements indicate American birth. See also *The Raleigh Register and North Carolina Gazette*, (Raleigh, North Carolina), November 3, 1826. O'Kelly's obituary stated his age at death to have been eighty-eight years, while other accounts have stated it was ninety-two. This is the only source known by which the date of his birth can be estimated.
- ³ MacClenny, *O'Kelly*, 15. See also *The Christian Sun* (ed. by Daniel W. Kerr and others, 117 volumes, 1844-1956, Pittsboro, North Carolina, and other locations), October 24, 1929, hereinafter cited as *Sun*. Also *The Christian Annual and Almanac of the Southern Convention for 1884*, (Privately Printed, 1884), 7-12.
- ⁴ Mecklenburg County Deeds Book 7, 425, Office of the Register of Deeds, Mecklenburg County Courthouse, Boynton, Virginia; Chatham County Deeds Book J, 460, Office of the Register of Deeds, Chatham County Courthouse, Pittsboro, North Carolina.
- ⁵ North Carolina State Records, Office of the Secretary of State, Raleigh; Aletha Jane Macon, *Four O'Kelly Sons and Some of Their Descendants*, (Brunswick, Georgia: Privately Printed, 1969), 160-164.
- ⁶ James O'Kelly, *The Author's Apology for Protesting Against the Government of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, (Richmond, Virginia: Printed by John Dixon, 1798), 65. Hereinafter cited as O'Kelly, *Apology*; see also, MacClenny, *O'Kelly*, 16. If O'Kelly attended Trinity College, Dublin, it was under the name of Kelly, as there were three students by that name at the institution during the period corresponding with his early years.
- ⁷ William W. Bennett, *Memorials of Methodism in Virginia*, (Richmond: The Author, 1871), 314. Hereinafter cited as Bennett, *Memorials*.
- ⁸ *Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for the Years 1773-1828*, (New York: Published by T. Mason and G. Lane, 3 volumes, 1840), I, 9. Hereinafter cited as *Methodist Minutes*. The early Minutes were customarily printed in question and answer form. The records were edited by Bishop Asbury before publication and do not contain complete details of the deliberations. See William Guirey, *The History of the Episcopacy, In Four Parts, From Its Rise To The Present Day*, (Privately Printed, undated), 287. Hereinafter cited as Guirey, *Episcopacy*.
- ⁹ Beverly Allen, "Some Account of the Work of God in America," *Arminian Magazine*, June, 1792.
- ¹⁰ Nelson Reed, *Journal*, The Methodist Historical Society of the Baltimore Annual Conference, Lovely Lane Museum, Baltimore, 62. Hereinafter cited as Reed, *Journal*. (Page numbers refer to a typescript of the original, both of which are in the Museum). Reed named the eighteen who voted for the measure. The collections of this Society hereinafter cited as Lovely Lane Museum.
- ¹¹ *Methodist Minutes*, I, 12-13; see also George Gatch, *Biographical Sketch of Rev. Philip Gatch*, The Philip Gatch Papers, Methodist Theological Seminary, Delaware, Ohio, 43-50. Hereinafter cited as Gatch, *Papers*. This sketch, based on the auto-

biography and journal of Philip Gatch, was written by his son. Most of it was published in John McLean, *Sketch of Rev. Philip Gatch*, (Cincinnati: Published by Swormstedt and Poe, For The Methodist Episcopal Church, 1854). Gatch gave a detailed account of the Fluvanna assembly, "which had full ecclesiastical power, according to the customs of Methodism in those days," and he charged that the Delaware meeting "was not a regular conference of preachers, in connection with the Rev. John Wesley, although it was so asserted in their Minutes." The sketch further states, "Ques. 10. What form of ordination shall be observed to authorize any preacher to administer? Ans. By that of a presbytery. Ques. 20. How shall the preachers be appointed? Ans. By a majority of the preachers." This does not clearly explain whether the action referred only to the sacraments or included the stationing of the preachers in circuits. If the latter construction was the true intent of the Conference, the preachers also assumed the authority formerly exercised by the superintendent.

- ¹² O'Kelly, *Apology*, 5; also, Nicholas Snethen, *A Reply to an Apology for Protesting Against the Methodist Episcopal Government*, (Philadelphia: Printed by Henry Tuckniss, 1800), 8. Hereinafter cited as Snethen, *Reply*. This author credited the proposal to Asbury.
- ¹³ Elmer T. Clark, J. Manning Potts, and Jacob S. Payton, (eds.), *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 3 volumes, 1958), I, 364-365. Hereinafter cited as Asbury, *Journal*. See also MacClenny, O'Kelly, 42. MacClenny erroneously concluded that the Cypress Chapel where the preachers met was the church by that name in Nansemond County, Virginia, and at least one hundred miles from Green Hill's plantation. This would have been a formidable overnight journey on horseback. The meeting took place at Cypress Chapel in North Carolina, which was only a short distance from the Franklin County home of Green Hill in the eastern section of the state.
- ¹⁴ O'Kelly, *Apology*, 74-75; also, Eli Washington Caruthers, *Revolutionary Incidents and Sketches of Character Chiefly in the "Old North State,"* (Philadelphia: Mayes and Zell, 1854), 412-413; and *D.A.R. Patriot Index*, (Washington: National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, 1966), 504.
- ¹⁵ *Methodist Minutes*, I, 13.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*, I, 13-15.
- ¹⁷ Asbury, *Journal*, I, 423.
- ¹⁸ *Methodist Minutes*, I, 21-23.
- ¹⁹ O'Kelly, *Apology*, 9.
- ²⁰ Richard N. Venable, "Diary of Richard N. Venable 1791-92," *Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, October, 1920, 138.
- ²¹ John Kobler, *Journal 1789-1792*, 2 volumes, Lovely Lane Museum, I, 207 (page numbers refer to typescript copy of the original, both of which are in the Museum). Hereinafter cited as Kobler, *Journal*.
- ²² James Meacham, *A Journal and Travel of James Meacham, 1788-1794*, 8 volumes, Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina, entries for November, 1792. Portions of Meacham's Journal have been published, but as the initials, difficult to read at best, were not correctly copied in every case, reference is here made to the dates in the original manuscript, which has unnumbered pages. Hereinafter cited as Meacham, *Journal*. See also "A Journal and Travel of James Meacham, 1789-1797," (Durham, North Carolina: The Trinity College Historical Society and the North Carolina Conference Historical Society, IX, (1912), 66-95; X (1914), 87-101). The old Virginia capitol building remained standing in Williamsburg until 1832.
- ²³ *Autobiography of Philip Gatch*, Gatch, *Papers*, 55; Nathan Bangs, *The Life of the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson: Compiled From His Printed and Manuscript Journals, and Other Authentic Documents*, (New York: Published by J. Emory and B. Waugh, 1830), 232. Hereinafter cited as Bangs, *Garrettson*.
- ²⁴ Francis Asbury to John Wesley, March 20, 1784, Asbury, *Journal*, III, 33.
- ²⁵ William Henry Foote, *Sketches of Virginia, Historical and Biographical*, (Philadelphia: Printed by William S. Martin, 1850), 412-413. Hereinafter cited as Foote, *Sketches of Virginia*.

- ²⁶ William McKendree, *Diary from May 7, 1790 to Feby. 19, 1791*, Vanderbilt University Library, Nashville, Tennessee, Wednesday 19 and Tuesday 24, 1790. (There is no pagination and months are not clearly designated.)
- ²⁷ Mecklenburg County Deeds Book 6, 471, Office of the Register of Deeds, Mecklenburg County Courthouse, Boydton, Virginia.
- ²⁸ Will of Elizabeth O'Kelly, Chatham County Book of Wills B, 249-250, Office of the Clerk of the Court, Chatham County Courthouse, Pittsboro, North Carolina.
- ²⁹ O'Kelly, *Slavery*. This is the earliest known publication of the author.
- ³⁰ Asbury, *Journal*, I, 488.
- ³¹ Francis Asbury to Stephen Donaldson, May 16, 1782, Asbury, *Journal*, III, 27.
- ³² James O'Kelly to an unknown, 1787, Lovely Lane Museum.
- ³³ John Wesley to Francis Asbury, September 20, 1788, John Telford, (ed.), *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, Standard Edition, (London: Epworth Press, 8 volumes, 1931), VIII, 91.
- ³⁴ *Proceedings of the Bishop and Presiding Elders of the Methodist-Episcopal Church, in Council Assembled, at Baltimore, on the First Day of December, 1789*, (Baltimore: Printed by William Goddard and James Angell, 1789), 4; also, *Minutes Taken at a Council of the Bishop and Delegated Elders of the Methodist-Episcopal Church Held at Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, December 1, 1790*, (Baltimore: Printed by W. Goddard and J. Angell, 1790), 1-8, hereinafter cited as *Council Minutes*; also, Jesse Lee, *A Short History of the Methodists*, (Baltimore: Magill and Cline, 1810), 150. Hereinafter cited as Lee, *Short History*.
- ³⁵ Asbury, *Journal*, I, 320.
- ³⁶ *Ibid*, I, 649.
- ³⁷ Alexander McCaine, *Letters on the Organization and Early History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, (Boston: Thomas F. Norris, 1850), 118. Hereinafter cited as McCaine, *Letters*.
- ³⁸ Alexander McCaine, *The History and Mystery of the Methodist Episcopacy*, (Baltimore: Printed by Richard J. Matchett, 1827), 64. Hereinafter cited as McCaine, *Methodist Episcopacy*.
- ³⁹ Asbury, *Journal*, I, 667-668, 692.
- ⁴⁰ Thomas Morrell, *Journal 1789-1809*, Drew University Library, Madison, New Jersey, 52. Hereinafter cited as Morrell, *Journal*. See Richard Whatcoat, *The Original Journal of Richard Whatcoat Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church from August 1, 1789 - May 25, 1791; Jan. 30, 1792 - 1793 Aug. 25*, portions of which are in both the Library of Congress, Washington, and Garrett Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois. A microfilm of the entire *Journal* is in the library of the Divinity School, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois. References are to the microfilm and the entry dated Nov. 1, 1792. The pages are unnumbered. See also Thomas Benjamin Neely, (ed.), *Journal of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1792*, (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1899), which is an account reconstructed from various sources. Hereinafter cited as Neely, *Conference 1792*.
- ⁴¹ Meacham, *Journal*, entries for November, 1792. The list of ministers was compiled from the journals of those who attended and the histories written by their contemporaries.
- ⁴² Bangs, *Garrettsen*, 230.
- ⁴³ O'Kelly, *Apology*, 31-32. Also, Edward Jacob Drinkhouse, *History of Methodist Reform*, (Baltimore: The Board of Publications of the Methodist Protestant Church, 2 volumes, 1899), I, 436. Hereinafter cited as Drinkhouse, *Methodist Reform*.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 34.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 35. The amendment was formally recorded as follows: "After the Bishop appoints the Preachers at Conference to their several circuits, if any one think himself injured by the appointment, he shall have liberty to appeal to the Conference and state his objections; and if the Conference approve his objections, the Bishop shall appoint him to another circuit." The Minutes of the Conference have not been preserved, but the 1892 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church reconstructed the record as much as was possible from contemporary accounts. See also Neely, *Conference 1792*, 2.
- ⁴⁶ Lee, *Short History*, 179.

- ⁴⁷ Meacham, *Journal*, entry November 4, 1792.
- ⁴⁸ William Colbert, *A Journal of the Travels of William Colbert Methodist Preacher thro' parts of Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Delaware, and Virginia in 1790 to 1838*, Garrett Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois. (Page numbers refer to a typescript in 8 volumes of the original manuscript, both of which are in the library of Garrett Theological Seminary), I, 84.
- ⁴⁹ O'Kelly, *Apology*, 35.
- ⁵⁰ Ezekiel Cooper, Manuscript draft apparently to be used as an editorial, Ezekiel Cooper Papers, 24 volumes, Garrett Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois, Vol. 14, MS. 8.
- ⁵¹ O'Kelly, *Apology*, 36-37.
- ⁵² Thomas Coke, *Extracts of the Journal of the Late Rev. Thomas Coke, L.L.D.: Comprising Several Visits to North-America and the West-Indies; His Tour Through a Part of Ireland, And His Nearly Finished Voyage to Bombay in the East-Indies: To Which is Prefixed a Life of the Doctor*, (Dublin: Printed by R. Napper for the Methodist Book Room, 1816), 187.
- ⁵³ Kobler, *Journal*, I, 209-210.
- ⁵⁴ Thomas Ware, *Sketches of the Life and Travels of Rev. Thomas Ware, Who Has Been An Itinerant Methodist Preacher For More Than Fifty Years*, (New York: Published by T. Mason and G. Lane for the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1839), 219-221.
- ⁵⁵ O'Kelly, *Apology*, 39. The reference is to the Synod of Dort which convened in 1618-1619. A later edition of the work printed in Hillsborough, North Carolina, in 1829 erroneously read, "O! Don't, Don't."
- ⁵⁶ Kobler, *Journal*, I, 210.
- ⁵⁷ George Wells, *Diary, 1790-1792*, Lovely Lane Museum, November 6, 1792.
- ⁵⁸ Meacham, *Journal*, November, 1792.
- ⁵⁹ Bangs, *Garrettson*, 231.
- ⁶⁰ Lee, *Short History*, 180.
- ⁶¹ Meacham, *Journal*, November, 1792.
- ⁶² O'Kelly, *Apology*, 42-43.

Chapter II

The Genesis of the Christian Church

In addition to the major schism of O'Kelly, the Methodist Episcopal Church also experienced a minor one in 1792. William Hammett, in Charleston, South Carolina, had clashed with the episcopal authority and withdrawn from the Church.¹ As a diplomat, Asbury had few if any equals and no superior among the Methodists, and he acted speedily to restore unity. He preferred to keep O'Kelly within the Church, and the Virginia preacher did not wish to leave it, but both men stubbornly insisted upon peace on their own terms. The Bishop lost no time in his efforts to effect a reconciliation, for two schisms almost simultaneously was alarming. As soon as the Baltimore meeting ended, Asbury rode with all possible speed to the Virginia Conference, which met at Manchester, in Chesterfield County, on November 26, 1792. Upon his arrival, he learned that O'Kelly had already informed the people of the events that had transpired at the General Conference, and Asbury was further dismayed when William McKendree and Rice Haggard sent him their resignations in writing. Yet the battle was not lost, and the Bishop persuaded the assembly to agree that the disgruntled clergymen still had the authority to preach, and because of O'Kelly's worn out condition, that he be paid forty pounds annually, "provided he was peaceable, and forebore to excite divisions among the brethren."² The unhappy elder continued to preach, but refused the salary. Later he received ten pounds which he understood was a gift from the Bishop and applied it on the purchase of a horse. When he discovered that his associates considered this a bribe to insure his silence, he expressed his willingness to return it, and accepted no more.³

Efforts were also made by the recalcitrant ministers to restore harmony. As a result of two meetings, a petition was drafted and dispatched to the Bishop by John Chappel and Edward Almond, but it was returned on the grounds that the signing of such a document was a violation of the Methodist Discipline. A conference was then called at Piney Grove, in Chesterfield County, in August, 1793, where the agreement was reached to request Asbury to meet with the clergy and discuss the government of the Church. When the Virginia Conference convened at Petersburg in November of that same year, the Bishop refused the request. His reply was formally presented to the petitioners in December, 1793, at Manakintown with the explanation that the Bishop had no authority to call such a meeting, "therefore, if five hundred preachers would come on their knees before me, I would not do it."⁴ With that statement the door firmly closed to further negotiations and the clergymen, dedicated to lives of Christian evangelism, faced two alternatives: (1) They could remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church as it was then governed, or (2) they could form a church of their own. They preferred neither, but as they could not conscientiously accept the former, they decided upon the latter and began the organization of a new Christian denomination.

It was at Manakintown in 1793 and not at Baltimore in 1792 that James O'Kelly left the Methodist Episcopal Church. Numerous reasons have been advanced to explain the Virginia preacher's action. Asbury concluded that O'Kelly desired to obtain the episcopal power and rule the Church himself, while others have simply stated that his ambitions were frustrated.⁵ To contemplate the possibility that he might some day be made a bishop would have been only normal behavior in any Methodist divine. As for power, the elder had been elevated in rank next to the bishop himself, and his authority was extensive; it was also within the realm of possibility that he might have eventually succeeded to the episcopal office had he remained with the Methodist Episcopal Church. Where else could he have hoped to find as much power as he already had? Certainly not in the new organization which he helped to found because it was governed by the ministers in conference, each with equal voice, and O'Kelly exercised no more authority than any of his colleagues. This was basically the plan which he had advocated so strenuously to the Methodists, and it was not designed to increase his personal power.

Another reason which has been advanced to explain O'Kelly's withdrawal was his theology. Jesse Lee related that a fellow cleric, whose name he did not divulge, informed him in Baltimore that the Virginian left the Conference because he feared a charge of heresy was going to be brought against him.⁶ Nicholas Snethen also wrote:

... we do not mean to assert it as a truth, that this was the case; yet it is not altogether destitute of probability; for it is very certain that evidence could have been produced, that he had imbibed, and propagated the *Unitarian heresy*; and that some of the preachers had it in contemplation to impeach him at that general conference.⁷

The evidence was the conviction of two itinerants, also unnamed, who had "imbibed *heretical sentiments*, concerning the personality of the Holy Trinity, from James O'Kelly."⁸ Heresy was a charge of sufficient gravity that it should have been presented to the Conference, which continued its sessions in Baltimore for several days after O'Kelly's departure. If this accusation was introduced, it was either dismissed as groundless, which was possible, or no action was taken regarding it, which is incredible. Although both authors wrote their accounts several years after the 1792 assembly, neither mentioned any action as a result of the affair. Furthermore, that Bishop Asbury would have authorized a heretic to continue to preach as a Methodist clergyman is unbelievable.

The heroic efforts of the Methodist itinerants to raise moral standards and preach salvation to the lostness of the pioneers' souls is one of the bright pages in the history of the growth of the United States. Their accomplishments were in no way discredited by the fact that they were to a large extent limited in their knowledge of theology, for their purpose was to preach discipline rather than dogma. They understood the rules of Methodism but they could easily have become confused on a matter of theological interpretation. James O'Kelly clarified his position by publishing the creed in which he believed.

Now, with regard to my faith. 1. I believe in God the Father Almighty, who by a gracious Providence hath placed me in a free country, where I am secure from the rage of Kings and Bishops. 2. I believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth; whose precious blood hath freed me from condemnation, notwithstanding the charges of the grand synod! 3. I believe in the Holy Ghost, and humbly thank and adore the Eternal Spirit, who hath enlightened mine understanding, to discover the mystery of iniquity working in a *spurious* Episcopacy, and now I behold the wonders in Christ's law; and the all-sufficiency of a "Bible Government."⁹

To O'Kelly, Jesus was the center of his spiritual universe, and no Methodist preacher was more Christocentric. Not only did he believe in and preach the Divinity of Jesus Christ, but he conceived of the Son as an "equal Deity" with the Father, and to deny this "is in effect denying the atonement, because Christ is God and God is Christ."¹⁰ To him, the Holy Trinity consisted of three manifestations of God and not three separate deities. He explained, "They are not

to be considered as *three* Gods . . . but *one* God." O'Kelly elaborated further:

The word Trinity is not found in the Scriptures, but we read of three that bear record, and we need some word to convey our meaning, as we use many proper words not found in holy writ. Then to prevent the inaccurate manner of confounding one thing with another, perhaps the truth lies here. The Glorified Person, Jesus Christ, is the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace; therefore the glorious divine essentials that we call the Trinity, reside in the one Divine Person Jesus Christ. 'Great is the mystery, etc.'¹¹

The theological concept of the Trinity consisting of the three persons in one God, as opposed to three distinct persons, did not deny the divinity of Jesus Christ, and it was not Unitarianism, nor was it heresy. The preaching of this interpretation may have led to misunderstanding on the part of the other clergymen, many of whom had less educational advantages than O'Kelly. Regardless of that possibility, the descriptions by eye-witnesses of the universal grief and dismay exhibited in the Conference when O'Kelly's resignation was read do not seem compatible with a movement underway to charge the preacher with heretical beliefs. Retrospective historians, who wrote after the heat of the quarrel had cooled, have generally conceded that the Virginian was not guilty of heterodoxy. His disagreement was over polity, not theology.¹²

Snethen also wrote that O'Kelly was rebellious because of the rejection of his literary compositions by the Council in 1790:

A laboured performance in favour of infant baptism, which he presented for publication, was disapproved of by the first council. A treatise against slavery, which he put into the hands of bishop Asbury, was given to Dr. Coke for correction; but the Doctor complained so much of its bad logic, and bad grammar, that our author took offence, and determined to trust no more of his works in the hands of such critics.¹³

No author enjoys having the products of his pen considered without value, but as a reason for a clergyman leaving the unity of his church on such grounds seems ridiculous. O'Kelly published his works anyway and wrote several more, and while it has already been acknowledged that he was not a literary giant, his books circulated. The treatise on slavery even brought forth a comment from the observant Devereux Jarratt:

Father O'Kelly has lately published an essay on the subject. It is, no doubt, a well meant effort: but it is a jumbled spot of work—though it may not be the less efficacious on that account. His glosses on Scripture are very inaccurate: indeed he seems to have so little understanding of Scripture, that he darkens rather than illustrates those passages he has undertaken to explain.

However he is a good man, and valiant for what he judges to be the truth. And it must be confessed, that many melancholy truths are too justly depicted in that pamphlet.¹⁴

The author realized that it was his views and not his literary style or misconceptions of Scripture that were the main object of the criticism of the staunchly pro-slavery Jarratt. O'Kelly probably appreciated the frank appraisal because he was primarily crusading against slavery, and if his booklet was of value in that respect, the criticism of his Scriptural citations was inconsequential. Neither did he lose his sense of humor, for he retorted to Snethen, "I have a sufficiency of *English Grammar* and language to display to the *public* the errors and tyranny of a *spurious* Episcopacy: . . ."¹⁵

All of the reasons discussed and other minor ones seem dwarfed into insignificance by O'Kelly's statement which has just been quoted, which contains the nucleus of his real reason for quitting the Methodist Episcopal Church. He had never liked the episcopacy; he thought its growing power was replacing the individual rights of the preachers; and he feared further dissension in the Church, so he left. That was the one concrete and plausible reason among all the conjectures and assumptions for the secession. In a letter to Jesse Nicholson, O'Kelly explained, "I am a friend to Christ; to his church, but not to prelatick government."¹⁶ Neither did the minister attempt to stifle his conscience. "I can do nothing against the truth; nor can I turn my mind as a man can his coat. I'd rather suffer with my own people," he wrote to Colonel Williams.¹⁷ He did not budge from his position.

After the final reply from Asbury was announced at the Manakintown meeting, a unanimous vote approved the separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church. O'Kelly described the next step:

We formed our ministers on an equality; gave the laymembers a balance of power in the legislature; and left the executive business in the church collectively.¹⁸

This action testifies to the determination of O'Kelly and his associates to follow truly democratic principles in the conduct of their affairs. Granting laymen a voice in the church government was in sharp contrast to the policy of the Methodist Episcopal Church which gave the laity no part in its governmental affairs until after the middle of the nineteenth century.

Two of the clergymen were then deputized to discuss the proposed plan for a new Church among the laity to ascertain their sentiments on the subject. As a result, "about one thousand souls departed from the ERRORS of the Methodist Episcopacy, in a few days," related O'Kelly.¹⁹ The Conference also approved the name of Republican Methodists for their new organization. Surmises have been made that the growing popularity in Virginia of Thomas Jefferson's Re-

publican political party was influential in the choice of a name, but it seems more reasonable that the selection was intended to denote a form of government that was not episcopal.²⁰

On August 4, 1794, a conference was held in Surry County, Virginia, to complete the organizaion of the new church. Tradition has placed that meeting at Old Lebanon Church. After lengthy deliberations, without agreement on any of the several plans proposed, the Conference decided to accept the Holy Scriptures as their sole guide. The traditional account of the event stated:

Finally, Rice Haggard stood up in the meeting with a copy of the New Testament in his hand and said, "Brethren, this is a sufficient rule of the faith and practice, and by it we are told that the disciples were called Christians, and I move that henceforth and forever the *followers* of Christ be known as Christians simply. The motion was unanimously adopted, since which time they have had no other name for their organization.²¹

The Republican Methodist name had clearly stood for the devotion of the sect to Methodism but not to episcopacy, but it had been only tentative, as had all the decisions at Manakintown. It remained popular with some of the ministers who never ceased to use it, and O'Kelly and his associates were referred to by that name as well as "O'Kelly-ites" for years after the change made in 1794. Haggard, who later was responsible for the followers of Barton Stone accepting "Christian" as the name for their new church in Kentucky, was responsible for the permanent name of the Christian church.²² The statements of both William Lanphier and Robert Punshon agreed that the new appellation was accepted at the Surry County assembly, and O'Kelly's account supported the fact when he commented:

11 We were much delighted to find that the true hierarchy, or primitive church government, which came down from heaven, was a republic, Eph. 11. 12. although "Christian Church" is the name.²³

With the name and principles of belief agreed upon and an ordained clergy to lead it, the newborn Church emerged into the world to begin the struggles of infancy.

A brief "sketch" was then prepared for the benefit and information of the new membership:

10 We learn from the book of God, that the church in general, includes all the real Christians in the world. Eph. v. 25, I. Cor. xii. 13.15.

11 Any number of christians united in love, having Christ for their head, and center of union, constitutes a church.

...

15 There were Elders in the church beside the Apostles, who laboured in the word and doctrine: Some of those could prophesy, speak with tongues, interpret, &c.

16 But after those extraordinary missionaries had run their race, only one order of ministers existed in the church. Acts xx. 17.

These guidelines were accepted by the assembly, with the result:

3 Thus, the blessed *Jesus* was proclaimed *King*, and *Head* of the people; without *one* dissenting voice.

4 Cordially renouncing all human institutions in the church, as being a species of Popery, and not fit to govern souls.

5 Then as free citizens in the land of Columbia, and servants of the great *King*, we proceeded according to divine order, to ordain Elders.

Preachers were then selected, approved and ordained in the name of the Holy Trinity, and, "Thus the dispised minority began to build on the TRUE BASIS, our sure foundation."²⁴

Because of the paucity of records concerning the new Church, it is impossible accurately to name the ministers who founded the organization. The Methodist records for 1793 list James O'Kelly, John Allen, Rice Haggard, and John Robertson (Robinson) as withdrawn from the connection.²⁵ William McKendree resigned after the 1792 Conference, but later returned to the Methodist Church and eventually became one of its bishops. Asbury confirmed the early leadership of O'Kelly, Edward Almond, Jeremiah Cosden, and "J.K."²⁶ In addition to these preachers, MacClenny named Thomas Hardy, Henry Burger, John Hayes, Benjamin Rainey, James Jackson, Thomas Reeves, and James Warren as having joined O'Kelly immediately after the secession, and William Guirey added Micajah Debruler and Joshua Worley to the list. Among those who had affiliated with the new Church by 1810 were Burwell Barrett, Mills Barrett, Joseph Bland, Peter Culpepper, William Glendinning, William Guirey, James Smith, Richard Gunter, Clement Nance, Abel Olive, Benjamin Reeves, James Haw, William Lanphier, Nathaniel P. Tatum, Francis Williamson, Benjamin Ogden, William Dameron, William Moore, Joseph Hackett, Daniel Stringer, Joseph Hartley, David Haggard, Adam Cloud, Coleman Pendleton, William Grimes, John Hanks, T. Morris, Benjamin Rose, John West, Joseph Thomas, T. Ray, and

— Hafferty.²⁷ Possibly some ministers on the list had never belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church, but a large majority of them had been members of that denomination. William W. Bennett concluded that thirty-six ministers left the old Church, and inasmuch as a memorandum made at one of the Conferences corroborates that number, it has been accepted as correct.²⁸ There are no records known which contain the names of those present at the Conferences at Manakintown or in Surry County.

These clergymen all had influence; many of their friends followed their lead. The personality and popularity of a preacher drew more

people into his flock than did the doctrine of the Church which he represented. This has always been true, but the difficulty of travel was peculiar to the period. Often families united in a denomination which had a church conveniently located near their home; they were not likely to make arduous journeys to a more distant house of worship because of theological differences. These facts partially explain the rapid growth of the Christian Church, but not entirely, because the greater part of its membership during the early years of its existence came from the ranks of the Methodist Episcopal Church. William Warren Sweet concluded that in Virginia, between 1793 and 1799, 4,317 departed from the old Church,²⁹ but it is possible that all of them did not join the new organization. In other states changes of church membership also occurred, and Leroy M. Lee estimated the total loss by 1795 to have reached 7,352,³⁰ or approximately twenty per cent of the total enrollment. Quite naturally, Asbury and his colleagues were alarmed over the situation and wrathfully accused O'Kelly and his associates of attempting to enrich the Christian Church by impoverishing the Methodist Episcopal Church. "James O'Kelly, and Rice Haggard, . . . spared no pains in trying to draw off disciples after them," wrote Jesse Lee, and the consequent captivity of "the Lord's flock" was sufficient "to make the Saints of God weep between the porch and the altar."³¹ Devereux Jarratt, who had championed Wesley's societies but disapproved founding the Methodist Episcopal Church, almost gleefully commented:

O'Kelly does great things in the devisive way and I dare say he will make Asbury's Mitre set very uneasy on his head, so as to give sensible pain to his heart, and it may be to such a degree, that he may sincerely wish Dr. Coke had never given him a Mitre at all.³²

Stith Mead, referring to O'Kelly as "our present antagonist," wrote that "a Judas of Galilee" must be feared at a time when many were "Butchering the Church."³³ Proselytizing was always a natural explanation of a change in denominational membership, but it did not fully account for the entire Methodist exodus. William Watters, writing to Edward Dromgoole in 1795, advanced another reason:

. . . we have had a good deal of uneasiness both in Town and country, between the travelling preachers and people. The preachers keeping in and turning out who they pleas [e]; not allowing Local preachers or people to have anything to say in the business.

The consequence is many people withdrew: [w]rote for Mr. O'Kelly and he is now preaching through the neighborhood while multitudes from every quarter flock to hear him.³⁴

Nevertheless, James O'Kelly continued to be the central target for further vituperations, and even after his death it was stated:

Still, if he [O'Kelly] had meditated mischief, he accomplished enough to gratify the taste of anyone whose lust of evil is not set on fire of hell.³⁵

Despite the severe criticism of O'Kelly by some of the Methodists, an amazing degree of toleration existed between the clergy and membership of both Churches. The itinerants of the old Church visited homes of those who belonged to the new one and gratefully accepted their hospitality. Jeremiah Norman, a loyal Methodist divine, recorded in his diary:

called on E. Almond, a Republican methodist. we discoursed the Subject of his leaving the connexion. I considered it but a poor reason for doing such work as that however all men judge for them selves. after taking my repast rode to Dr. Crowder's where I arrived some what in the night. I was received with some apparent warmth. I suped with them (after Prayer) took some repose. the Doctor is also a republican.³⁶

The Christians not only attended their own services but went to hear the traveling Methodists, also. James Meacham "met with many of the brethren who have separated from us," and the next day "after preaching talked with John Chapelle who is one of the members of the Republican Conference and preached."³⁷ John Early, before becoming a Methodist bishop, preached "to a mixed people of four or five professions: M [Methodists]; B [Baptists]; P [Presbyterians]; and O [O'Kellyites]."³⁸ Another experience was recorded by Stith Mead:

I preached near Rough Creek Church & had a number of the Republicans (or O'Kellyans) to hear and some appeared to feel the word. I proposed to meet all that would stay in the room, and be you well afeard I had a mixed number—Consisting of Methodist, Republicans (or O'Kellyans) Presbyterians, Baptists & Sinners & we had a profitable time.³⁹

Although governmental disputes almost eclipsed dogmatic differences, evangelism was not entirely neglected in the programs of both Churches.

James O'Kelly sincerely believed that all religious quarrels could be settled and Christianity advanced by a union of the Protestant churches on a common ground. Actually, he held ecumenical concepts far ahead of his time, and he arrived at them through his own experiences. Aware of the value of the printing press and devoted to the use of his pen, he wrote and published *An Address To the Christian Church Under The Similitude of an Elect Lady and Her Children*. The date of publication is unknown, but it could not have been later than 1799. Based on the Second Epistle of John, the treatise was concerned with the general unity of the early Christians and the possibility

for joining together again. In developing that theme, the author outlined his plan:

7. I would propose to promote Christian union by the following method, viz: Let the *Presbyterians* lay aside the book called the confession of faith.

8. Which faith, is proposed to ministers before they are received, and instead thereof, present the Holy Bible to the minister who offers himself as a fellow-labourer.

9. Let him be asked if he believes that all things requisite and necessary for the church to believe and obey, are already recorded by inspired men.

10. Let the *Baptists* open a more charitable door, and receive to their communion those of a christian life and experience; and they themselves eat bread with their father's children.

11. Let my offended brethren, the *Methodists*, lay aside their book of discipline, and abide by the government laid down by the apostles—seeing those rules of faith and practice were given from above.

12. And, answer for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. II Tim. 3. 16. 17.

13. What more does the church need, than is above inserted! Let their *Episcopal dignity* submit to Christ, who is the head, and only head of his church; and then we as brethren will walk together, and follow God as dear children.

14. O, how this would convince the world that we were true men, and not speculators. This would give satan an incurable wound; and make deism ashamed.

15. Again, as each church is called by a different name, suppose we dissolve those *unscriptural* names, and for peace sake, and for Christ's sake, call ourselves Christians? This would be—"The Christian Church."⁴⁰

Without doubt, the expression of his idea was the most logical work produced by O'Kelly's pen, but it carried little weight among its readers outside of his own Church. At least Asbury's reaction was recorded, for he summarized all that others would give up to form the union, then wrote, "I ask in turn, what will James give up? His Unitarian errors?"⁴¹ James possessed no Unitarian errors, and had nothing to give up, for he had already made his surrender of denominational creeds and rules in 1792.

The indifferent reception of his proposition, added to the sting of Methodist recriminations, stimulated O'Kelly to further literary effort. In order to explain his rupture with the old Church to many who understood little of Conference deliberations and to defend himself to those who did, in 1798 he published *The Author's Apology for Protesting Against the Methodist Episcopal Government*. The pamphlet was signed "Christicola," but there is no doubt that O'Kelly wrote it. The author designated people by their first names and used numbered

verses in his text in imitation of Biblical passages. In defense of his actions, O'Kelly summarized the Wesleyan movement in America and explained that he did not consider the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church to be the proper fulfillment of John Wesley's plans for American Methodism. He held Coke and Asbury responsible for disregarding the wishes of the Founder, and he repeated his indictment of the episcopal power. Bishop Asbury interpreted O'Kelly's charges as a direct and personal attack upon himself and immediately made plans to retaliate. This was the beginning of a heated war of words.

The Bishop and Jesse Lee first planned to attend a Conference of the Republican Methodist Church and debate O'Kelly's charges with him at the meeting, but later decided that a rebuttal in writing would be better. Asbury had compiled a rejoinder of three hundred pages when the Conference of 1800 appointed a committee to assist him⁴². Nicholas Snethen, one of its members, assumed the responsibility for writing the final draft of the manuscript, and it was under his name that *A Reply to an Apology for Protesting Against the Methodist Episcopal Government* was printed.⁴³ In the pamphlet O'Kelly was charged with infidelity to the Methodists in refusing to abide by the decision of the 1792 Conference and with maligning the character of Bishop Asbury. The validity of some of the charges was admitted, while others were considered exaggerated to the point of falsehood. The crux of Snethen's argument was that a Church must have a creed and that the Bible, as it was written, did not constitute one. O'Kelly's pamphlet had explained his position to his followers; Snethen had explained the stand taken by the Methodists, and neither publication had changed the situation in the least.

Actually, the author of the *Reply* wrote as the spokesman for the Bishop, who called Snethen "my silver trumpet."⁴⁴ The pamphlet had not only been a rebuttal to the *Apology* but had also ridiculed O'Kelly's ecumenical proposal, and one of its most significant results was to evoke another publication from the Virginia clergyman. In 1801 he wrote *A Vindication of the Author's Apology With Reflections on the Reply*, in which the author did not really reply to Snethen, with whom he was not personally acquainted, but to Asbury, whose sentiments had been expressed by his deputy. O'Kelly fully explained his belief in the Holy Trinity, his devotion to American independence, and insisted that the Holy Scriptures constituted sufficient guidance for a Church. He summarized his argument with the conclusion:

I contend for Bible government, Christian equality, and the Christian name. If this Divine order should prosper and prevail against the powerful efforts of your Episcopacy, I shall acknowledge it to be a Divine Providence; but if we fall through, and you prevail,

we must take it as a just judgment, on account of disobedience to those sacred rules to which we have subscribed!⁴⁵

Edward Dromgoole wisely counselled Snethen not to pursue the matter further on the grounds that it would needlessly prolong the argument, but the advice was not heeded. The decision may not have Snethen's prerogative, as he was writing for the Bishop as instructed by the Conference. At any rate, he published *An Answer to James O'Kelly's Vindication of his Apology*,⁴⁶ in which all the previous arguments and charges were reiterated, with similar conclusions and results. Tempers had flared on both sides; many regrettable charges and counter-charges had been voiced but neither side had won, and the situation remained unchanged. The principal value of the pamphlets today lies in the considerable factual material they contain, and this justified their publication to some extent. Years later Snethen may have ruefully remembered his authorship when he also seceded from his Church and joined the Methodist Protestants, but there is no indication of any regret on the part of James O'Kelly for anything he wrote.

The major battles were ended, but the literary warfare between the churches only diminished gradually. Other manuscripts continued to emerge from the printing press. In addition to O'Kelly's later essays,⁴⁷ William Guirey wrote *The History of the Episcopacy*, which was followed by another book entitled *Priestcraft Detected*. Stith Mead replied to the latter work with *An Answer To Priestcraft Detected* which was so provocative that Guirey sued Mead for slander and was awarded damages of four hundred thirty dollars in 1808 by the court in Caroline County, Virginia.⁴⁸ Alexander McCaine wrote *The History and Mystery of the Methodist Episcopacy*, and there were others of less impressive size, including Benjamin Rainey's *Episcopacy Unmasked*. In that work, the Republican Methodist commented on the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784. "The sacred scriptures have not a place in the constitution thus made, neither is the name of God mentioned in it," he wrote.⁴⁹ The same author also collaborated with Daniel Stringer in a *Pamphlet in Vindication of the Christian Doctrine*.⁵⁰ William Glendinning added his criticism of the Methodists in *The Life of William Glendinning, Preacher of the Gospel*.⁵¹ "That religious tyranny over the consciences of men, constitutes the *Mystery of Iniquity*, is clear to the meanest capacity," wrote John West, who elaborated further:

Party-spirit, Prejudice and Bigotry, are as much the offspring of human regulations in the Church, as love and fellowship are the Fruits of the SPIRIT OF GOD.⁵²

Naturally, Methodist pens were also busy and produced an impressive number of publications favorable to their views. Thus, the war of

words continued for years and only diminished as the nineteenth century advanced.

The effect of the publications on the ministry of both denominations was an unhealthy one as both sides felt compelled to defend their systems and theology. Heckling occurred in public meetings and arguments in private ones, all of which to some extent diverted the efforts of the clergymen from Christian evangelism. Joseph Thomas, who began his ministry in the Christian Church and became known affectionately as the White Pilgrim, was challenged in a meeting to define his creed. This provoked the following detailed reply:

I answered that I was not a universalist, calvinist, arminian, socenian, arian, trinitarian, presbyterian, methodist, baptist, quaker &c. &c. But I am an *christian*. If you desire to know the doctrine which I hold, you may find it contained in the old and new testaments.⁵³

On another occasion a Methodist minister who had "attended for the express purpose of controversy," confronted Thomas with the statement, "*the word of God is not sufficient to rule and govern the church, unless it had eyes to see and a mouth to speak.*"⁵⁴ Fortunately, such clashes became less frequent as time healed some of the wounds, and the growth of both Churches left the preachers with less time to annoy one another. James O'Kelly was probably the target of attack longer than anyone else, for "he was pursued with rancor to his death," according to Drinkhouse.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, a ray of light penetrated the somber clouds of those unhappy times which served as a reminder that though those men possessed all the weaknesses and frailties of human beings their actions sprang from honest motives because their main purpose in life was preaching the Gospel. In 1802, upon learning that O'Kelly was ill in Winchester, Virginia, Francis Asbury sent a message informing the Virginian he would visit him, if such was desired. Upon receiving an affirmative reply from O'Kelly, Asbury met him:

We met in peace, asked of each other's welfare, talked of persons and things indifferently, prayed, and parted in peace. Not a word was said of the troubles of former times:—perhaps this is the last interview we shall have upon earth.⁵⁶

And it was the last, and the beginning of a truce, after which both denominations properly concentrated on the great task of promoting Christianity in a fast-growing country, rather than fighting each other. Complete peace was not to be the lot of either organization, but both marched forward bravely to face whatever lay ahead. Years after both men passed from the earthly life a substantial part of O'Kelly's proposals were gradually adopted by the Methodists, and after nearly two centuries his ecumenical plans for union have not appeared as fantastic as when they were first drafted. Time rapidly healed many

wounds and Bishop McKendree, when he learned of O'Kelly's death, is reported to have exclaimed, "A great man in Israel has fallen."⁵⁷ O'Kelly's turbulent career closed on a satisfactory note, for he witnessed the success of democratic church government in the denomination he had helped to found. The Christian Church in the South was increasing in stature and striving for a greater role in the program of Christian evangelism.

Footnotes

- ¹ Emory Stevens Bucke, (General Editor), *The History of American Methodism*, (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 3 volumes, 1964), I, 617-622, summarizes the Hammett schism.
- ² Asbury, *Journal*, I, 735-736.
- ³ O'Kelly, *Apology*, 43-44.
- ⁴ *Ibid*, 45-47.
- ⁵ Asbury, *Journal*, III, 113. Compare Frederick Abbott Norwood, "James O'Kelly—Methodist Maverick," *Methodist History*, April, 1966, 17.
- ⁶ Lee, *Short History*, 180.
- ⁷ Nicholas Snethen, *A Reply to An Apology For Protesting Against the Methodist Episcopal Government*, (Philadelphia: Printed by Henry Tuckniss, 1800), 32-33. Hereinafter cited as Snethen, *Reply*.
- ⁸ *Ibid*, 33.
- ⁹ James O'Kelly, *A Vindication of the Author's Apology, with Reflections on the Reply, and a Few Remarks on Bishop Asbury's Annotations on his Book on Discipline*, (Raleigh: Joseph Gales, 1800), 30-31. Hereinafter cited as O'Kelly, *Vindication*.
- ¹⁰ James O'Kelly, *The Prospect Before Us*, (Hillsborough, North Carolina: Printed by Dennis Heartt, 1824), 3-4, 18, 38-39. Hereinafter cited as O'Kelly, *Prospect Before Us*.
- ¹¹ James O'Kelly, *The Divine Oracles Consulted: Or an Appeal to the Law and Testimony*, (Hillsborough, North Carolina: Printed by Dennis Heartt, 1820), 39-40. Hereinafter cited as O'Kelly, *Divine Oracles*. See Charles Franklin Kilgore, *The James O'Kelly Schism in the Methodist Episcopal Church*, (Mexico: Mexico City: Casa Unida De Publicaciones, 1963), 79-83.
- ¹² Holland N. McTyeire, *A History of Methodism*, (London: Richard D. Dickinson, 1885), 413.
- ¹³ Snethen, *Reply*, 43. Compare *Council Minutes*, 1-8. No mention was made of the rejection for publication of O'Kelly's manuscripts.
- ¹⁴ Devereux Jarratt, *The Life of the Reverend Devereux Jarratt, Rector of Bath Parish, Virginia, Written by Himself in a Series of Letters Addressed to the Rev. John Coleman*, (Baltimore: Warner and Hanna, 1806), 81-82. Hereinafter cited as Jarratt, *Life*. In the same letter Jarratt's appraisal of O'Kelly's work is followed by a frank criticism of Dr. Coke's writing.
- ¹⁵ O'Kelly, *Vindication*, 32.
- ¹⁶ Bennett, *Memorials*, 323-325.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*, 325-326.
- ¹⁸ O'Kelly, *Apology*, 47.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*, 48.
- ²⁰ MacClenny, *O'Kelly*, 114; O'Kelly, *Apology*, 48. As the members of the 1794 Conference in Surry County were designated as "Republicans" when they assembled, the name must have been agreed upon at the previous assembly at Manakintown.
- ²¹ Colby D. Hall, *Rice Haggard The American Frontier Evangelist Who Revived The Name Christian*, (Fort Worth, Texas: The T.C.U. Press, 1957), 28; Rice Haggard, *An Address to the Different Religious Societies on the Sacred Import of the Christian Name*, (Nashville: The Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 1954), 15.
- ²² Charles Crossfield Ware, *Barton Warren Stone*, (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1932), 147.
- ²³ O'Kelly, *Apology*, 51.
- ²⁴ *Ibid*, 50-51.
- ²⁵ *Methodist Minutes*, 49.
- ²⁶ Asbury, *Journal*, II, 12.
- ²⁷ MacClenny, *O'Kelly*, 125-138; Guirey, *Episcopacy*, 304-307. For further biographical sketches see Peter J. Kernodle, *Lives of Christian Ministers*, (Richmond:

- The Central Publishing Company, 1909). Hereinafter cited as Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*. See also Stith Mead to John Kobler, February 15, 1795, *Stith Mead Letterbook*, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, 130-131. Hereinafter cited as Mead, *Letterbook*.
- ²⁸ Bennett, *Memorials*, 541; also, a small booklet of handwritten notes by an unknown, evidently made at Methodist Conferences, Lovely Lane Museum, stated, "O'Kelly and 36 preachers withdrew."
- ²⁹ William Warren Sweet, *Virginia Methodism: A History*, (Richmond: Whittet and Shepperson, 1955), 134.
- ³⁰ Leroy M. Lee, *The Life and Times of Rev. Jesse Lee*, (Richmond: Published by John Early, 1848), 275. Hereinafter cited as Lee, *Life and Times*.
- ³¹ Lee, *Short History*, 196, 205.
- ³² Jarratt, *Life*, 78.
- ³³ Stith Mead to John Kobler, April 30, 1796, Lovely Lane Museum; Stith Mead to Hope Hull, July 7, 1794, Mead, *Letterbook*, 98-99.
- ³⁴ William Watters to Edward Dromgoole, May 16, 1795, quoted in William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier, Vol. IV: The Methodists*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 4 volumes, 1946), IV, 147-148.
- ³⁵ Lee, *Life and Times*, 274.
- ³⁶ Jeremiah Norman, *Journal 1793-1801*, 18 volumes, Stephen Beauregard Weeks Collection, in the Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, XI, 128. Hereinafter cited as Norman, *Journal*.
- ³⁷ Meacham, *Journal*, March 28, 29, 1793.
- ³⁸ John Early, "Diary of John Early, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, July, 1926, 250.
- ³⁹ Stith Mead to John Kobler, March 15, 1795, Mead, *Letterbook*, 134.
- ⁴⁰ James O'Kelly, *An Address to the Christian Church Under The Similitude of an Elect Lady and her Children*, (Richmond: Printed by Jones and Dixon, undated).
- ⁴¹ Asbury, *Journal*, II, 204.
- ⁴² *Ibid*, III, 173-174, 176.
- ⁴³ *Ibid*, II, 282.
- ⁴⁴ Drinkhouse, *Methodist Reform*, I, 329, 458.
- ⁴⁵ O'Kelly, *Vindication*, 62.
- ⁴⁶ Nicholas Snethen, *An Answer to James O'Kelly's Vindication of his Apology*, (Philadelphia: Printed by S. W. Conrad, 1802); also Edward Dromgoole to Nicholas Snethen, February 24, 1802, Dromgoole, *Papers*.
- ⁴⁷ A complete list of O'Kelly's publications is included in the Notes on Sources in this volume.
- ⁴⁸ Caroline County Court Order Book 1807-1809, 23, 203, 287, and 292. Office of the Clerk of the Court, Caroline County Courthouse, Bowling Green, Virginia. No copy has been found of either controversial publication.
- ⁴⁹ Guirey, *Episcopacy*, 309.
- ⁵⁰ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 48; Norman, *Journal*, VIII, 932.
- ⁵¹ William Glendinning, *The Life of William Glendinning, Preacher of the Gospel*, (Philadelphia: Printed by W. W. Woodward, 1795), 106-109.
- ⁵² John West, *A Key To The Mystery of Iniquity: or, An Address to Men of Candor, and Lovers of Truth*, (Alexandria, Virginia: Printed by Cottom and Stewart, 1805), 36, 94.
- ⁵³ Joseph Thomas, *The Life of the Pilgrim Joseph Thomas, Containing An Accurate Account of His Trials, Travels, and Gospel Labours*, (Winchester, Virginia: W. J. Foster, Printer, 1817), 199. Hereinafter cited as Thomas, *Pilgrim*.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 46.
- ⁵⁵ Drinkhouse, *Methodist Reform*, II, 169.
- ⁵⁶ Asbury, *Journal*, II, 359.
- ⁵⁷ E. W. Humphreys, *Memoirs of Deceased Christian Ministers; or Brief Sketches of the Lives and Labours of 975 Ministers, Who Died Between 1793 and 1880*, (Dayton, Ohio: Christian Publishing Company, 1880), 259. Hereinafter cited as Humphreys, *Memoirs*.

Chapter III

The Early Christian Conferences

Because of the paucity of records, only fragmentary knowledge exists of the activities of the Christians in the South from 1794 until 1818. The supposition, generally accepted as a fact, is that the minutes of conferences were publicly burned at the close of the session "lest they be used as established precedents in future conferences."¹ The available facts have been gleaned from autobiographies and accounts in either newspapers or religious periodicals. A General Meeting, later termed a Union Meeting, was held annually, and there were also periodic sectional assemblies. These sessions were open to the entire Church membership, as the following announcement of 1811 stated:

NOTICE

A general Meeting of the Elders and Brethren, of the *Christian Church*, is to be holden in Salem, Caroline County, Virginia, on the FIRST FRIDAY in October next ².

This meeting was held at Dickerson's Chapel, formerly a Methodist meeting house. Some of the church buildings used by the Christians were those abandoned by the Church of England; others had formerly been Methodist chapels. As time passed, individuals donated land and assisted in the erection of meeting houses for the Christians. On some occasions they were given the privilege of using buildings belonging to some other religious denomination, and meetings were held in private homes and professional offices when no other accommodations were available. Public buildings such as courthouses were often used, and William Guirey's sermon for the ordination of James Lockhart to the ministry was delivered in the State House of North Carolina in Raleigh.³ During the nineteenth century the preachers

were referred to almost exclusively as "elders" and the term was afterward used interchangeably with "minister" until recent years. They either served on an itinerant circuit or ministered to specific congregations as local preachers. These and other matters were deliberated and decided at the General Meetings.

There was a conference at Shiloh, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, in 1801, and another at the same location in 1805. Thomas E. Jeter, one of the converts made by O'Kelly² while on a missionary tour through Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, was ordained on the latter occasion. Raleigh, North Carolina, was the scene of the annual meetings in 1807 and the following year. At the first of these sessions in North Carolina license to preach was granted to the sixteen-year-old Joseph Thomas who eventually became affectionately known as "the White Pilgrim."⁴

Shortly after the organizational proceedings in 1794, John Robinson (Robertson), Clement Reed (Read), Thomas Hardy, Edward Almond, and possibly other associates of O'Kelly¹ objected that the name "Christian" did not differentiate sufficiently between the various branches of the universal Church, and they continued their ministry under the more distinctive appellation of "Republican Methodists." Although some of this group eventually merged with the Virginia Presbyterians, the name was not abandoned until after 1822.⁵

Coincident with the early years of Christian activity in the South was the formulation under the leadership of Abner Jones of a religious movement in the New England states known simply as "Christians." In 1808 Elias Smith of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, began the publication of *The Herald of Gospel Liberty*, a semi-monthly paper devoted to the interests of this group. The event was announced in the Raleigh, North Carolina *Star* with the comment:

*The Editor is a preacher of the sect of Methodists, usually denominated 'Christians,' and which he says "sprung up in the southern States about 15 years ago." We believe the Rev. Mr. James Kelly [O'Kelly], of Chatham county, in the State, formerly an able and eloquent preacher, is the founder of this sect.*⁶

Smith had learned of the existence of the southern Christians through a letter from William Lanphier, of Alexandria, Virginia, who wrote to learn the "name, discipline, form of Church-government, doctrine, and extent" of the New England group.⁷ The inquiry was followed in a short time by one from William Guirey which contained the following description of the southern Church:

After we became a separate people, three points were determined on, 1st. No head over the church but Christ. 2nd. No confession of faith, articles of religion, rubric, canons, creeds, &c. but the New Testament. 3rd. No religious name but christians. For sev-

eral years I have been a minister in this church and have traveled among the members from Philadelphia to the Southern frontier of Georgia. We have members in every state south of the Potomac, also a few churches in Pennsylvania; from the best information I can obtain I suppose there are about 20,000 people in the Southern and Western States who call themselves by the *christian name*.⁸

In 1808 Robert Punshon also informed the editor:

In Virginia about 16 years ago it pleased the Lord to call out from the body of Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians, a people into Gospel order, laying the foundation on Moses and the Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone; . . . The Church has spread through Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, and the Western part of the State of Pennsylvania, were [where] there are thousands united in the same spirit worshipping the Lord.⁹

The same year Elder Jonathan Foster wrote from Winchester, Virginia, informing Smith of his intention to publish a pamphlet entitled, "A Scriptural Description of a true Christian Church." He concluded his letter with the assertion, "My Brother, we have no reverend, nor right reverends among us, no masters—we are all brethren."¹⁰

Elias Smith and his associates in New England were pleasantly surprised to be informed of the existence of the southern Christians. A letter of fraternal greeting was entrusted to Frederick Plummer, one of their ministers, and the emissary delivered this message at a General Meeting on May 26, 1809, at Shiloh Church, in Virginia. The reasons for this session had been publicly announced:

. . . for the purpose of preaching and expounding the word of God—for receiving Preachers and private Members, who approve of the Christian Order, and come properly recommended, &c, and finally for administering the Gospel Ordinances—for all the Lord's people.¹¹

The meeting was advertised twice in the *Raleigh Star*, with the request that it be copied in both the *Lynchburg (Virginia) Star*, and the *Virginia Argus*, and attendance was probably good. Plummer's communication was cordially received, and he was entrusted with a reply which acknowledged similarity in name and government of the two bodies, and concluded:

We feel thankful to God that on these points we may agree with you. O that the Mighty God of Israel may pour out his Holy Spirit upon us! We do love you and most ardently desire your prosperity and happiness. Do brethren pray for us, that we may honor the Christian name, serve our God acceptably, finish our course with joy, and finally shout the high praises of the God of our salvation in the mansions of eternal glory.¹²

The fraternal message was signed by William Glendenning (Glendinning), James Jackson, William Guirey, Thomas E. Jeter, Joseph H. Bland, T. Ray (of South Carolina), Henry Hays (Hayes), George Wilkins, James Hayes, Ellis Evans, Joseph Thomas, John Sled, Walter Chustian, Joseph Hatchett, William More, Philip Vass, and John Hayes. No mention was made of any organic merger or governmental union of the two separate groups. The letter was merely an expression of good will and an invitation to continue communications between the northern and southern Christians.

The New Englanders may have been disappointed in their failure to complete a concrete merger with their brethren in the South. Several months prior to the Shiloh meeting Elias Smith had written:

I really hope the time is near when something will be done to bring about an union among those who believe in the same Lord, and law. The matter is now in contemplation, and has been communicated to me.¹³

Joseph Thomas, despite the fact that he signed the friendly letter, left a critical account of the meeting:

At candlelight I was set forth to preach. I did so, to the joy of my own soul, and thought to the comfort of others. But F. Plummer (from New England) immediately rose up in the congregation, and in his discourse observed, "such preaching (alluding to mine) was not fit for God, men nor Devils." This, with some other impertinencies, disgusted the most of the preaching brethren, so that he was but coolly received. Though he came to open a communication between, and to unite the christians in the East and South together, he did not succeed in his mission.¹⁴

James O'Kelly did not sign the letter given to Plummer, either because he disapproved of the message or was not present at Shiloh. A summary of O'Kelly's ecumenical plan for Christian union was published in the *Herald of Gospel Liberty*¹⁵ just prior to the Virginia meeting indicating the approval of the proposal by Elias Smith, but no record of any personal correspondence between the southern elder and the editor has been found. An argument between Plummer and O'Kelly over Unitarianism would explain the latter's objection to signing the letter, if the encounter actually occurred. Years after the Shiloh meeting an account was published which may have been apocryphal. It related:

Mr. O'Kelly asked him, 'If Jesus Christ were now upon earth, and you knew it were he, would you worship him?' He answered, 'No, no sooner than I would you, for I do not believe he was any more divine.' Mr. O'Kelly replied, 'Then I have no fellowship for you!'¹⁶

If this clash was a reality, it would account for O'Kelly's attitude toward the New Englanders because his past experience had made

him extremely sensitive to the subject of Unitarianism; it would not explain why his closest associates found no barrier to their endorsement of the letter. The actual reason is unknown and may have been any one or all of those presented here, but the fact is indisputable that James O'Kelly did not sign the fraternal message to the New England Christians.

Abner Jones had left the Baptists to found his Christian sect, while O'Kelly had seceded from the Methodist Church to lead his group. Barton W. Stone, who organized the Christians in the South and West, had withdrawn from the Presbyterian Church. None of these three bodies constituted a formally organized church in the usual sense of the term, but each sought to promote Christianity without the shackles of written credo or dictatorial hierarchy. All of these groups which arose during the decades that ended the eighteenth century and opened the nineteenth were strikingly similar in principle and in the use of the name "Christian" to the exclusion of all other. While they did not become one organic body at the time, by 1820 they were all known as the "Christian Connection." In view of the amicable relations which developed between the northern and southern Christians, the time seemed propitious for an organizational merger, but this was prevented for several reasons. The principal block to a complete union was the dissension which arose over the proper mode of baptism.

The authentic method of administering baptism had been argued for generations before the subject became a controversial issue among the southern Christians. Not only were the clergy concerned but the laity were keenly interested in the matter. To the latter baptism was not an abstract theological concept about which they understood little or nothing, but a physical event that could be seen and experienced. Actually, there were three modes by which the rite could be administered to the convert: first, by sprinkling water on the head; second, by pouring water on the head; and third, by immersing the entire body of the person in water. The first two were not dissimilar except in terminology, but the third method, as indicated by its name, required complete immersion. O'Kelly acknowledged the validity of all three modes, as the Methodists had done, but disapproved of the latter as unscriptural and unnecessary. In fact, he did not consider baptism of any kind an absolute necessity to the converted Christian, for he wrote:

Pure faith, a reasonable Scripture hope, and Divine love, are essential; we cannot be saved without these. Now, shall we consider water baptism in any mode to be essential? God forbid that we should be so far deceived.¹⁷

However, strict immersionists not only were convinced that water baptism was required for all converts but insisted that immersion was

the only valid method. The New England branch of the Christian Connection were almost exclusively dedicated to this practice, as were the Christians in the midwest. O'Kelly advocated granting the right to each person to choose his preferred method, but the convinced immersionists would not agree to this plan.

The youthful Joseph Thomas had concluded that immersion was the mode of baptism most appealing to him and at the meeting in Raleigh in 1807 had voiced his preference:

Here were James O'Kelly and William Guirey [Guirey], the most eminent and popular of that church in the Southern regions. During this meeting, I opened my mind to J. O'Kelly on the subject of baptism, and desired him to immerse me. But in explaining the nature and use of baptism to me, he made it mean pouring. I believed from his age, experience and abilities of mind, he must be right, and on the Sabbath day of the meeting, I was baptized (as we then called it) in that way.¹⁸

Thomas was never completely satisfied with the rite, however, and in 1811 he was immersed shortly before his ordination to the ministry in Philadelphia.¹⁹

Thomas was thoroughly justified in his tribute to the eminence of William Guirey who had not only written his lengthy *History of the Episcopacy*, but had become an influential and popular preacher. At least two of his sermons had been published. The first, delivered by request before the Methodist Episcopal Church at Lynn, Massachusetts, in 1800, was a funeral sermon for George Washington.²⁰ The second, entitled *The Pattern in the Mount*, was written in 1806 and traced the scriptural origin of some of the doctrines of the southern Christians. Based on the text from Hebrews viii, 5: "See, saith he, that thou make all things according to *the pattern shewed to thee in the mount*," the theme of the homily was church government, and the popularity of the sermon required the printing of two editions.²¹ Not only was Guirey an eloquent preacher and a talented author, but his travels had included the West Indies, New England, and Georgia, in addition to the upper South. He was also a person of strong convictions and he had become convinced that immersion was not only the proper form of baptism but necessary for all converts to Christianity.

The tension which had been gradually developing over the subject of baptism came to a head in 1810 at a General Meeting at Pine Stake, which was probably in Orange County, Virginia. James O'Kelly and William Guirey, the two leaders of the session, crossed swords heatedly and neither could persuade the other to abandon his stand. Joshua Livesay, who had been present at the meeting, wrote an account years afterward of the controversy.

I found the Christians in a prosperous condition, with this exception, viz. that water-baptism by immersion had obtained some

footing among them, and had been assailed by some of its bitterest opposers, who were at that time laboring to exterminate it. This, however, was found to be impracticable, while the Bible was taken as our guide in all matters of religion. To accomplish the design, however, *human inventions* were resorted to—three articles were written, their tendency was to proscribe baptism; the reception of which articles was proposed to the meeting, in a manner, as the condition on which our union should be preserved.²²

The elder then narrated the outcome:

There were present, I think at this meeting 14 preachers—9 of whom were for the 'liberty of conscience,' respecting baptism, 3 were opposed to it, and 2 of us held our peace, as neutrals.—The Bible was held up in opposition to the man-made articles; but the latter would not give place to the former. The consequence was, a division took place immediately! And the breach has not been fully amended to this day. But since the demise of those who caused the division the wound has been in a very healing condition, and we trust will soon be entirely well.²³

Mills Barrett, who was also present at Pine Stake, recalled in 1838 that the furor caused by the proposal of James O'Kelly that only the sprinkling mode be used for infant baptism caused "a division of the churches."²⁴ According to MacClenny, William Guirey withdrew from the meeting and formed the Independent Christian Baptist Church, which existed until 1818.²⁵ Very little is known about the career of the talented and eloquent Guirey after the regrettable breach at Pine Stake. Furthermore, there is no known record of the participation of James O'Kelly in any general meeting or conference after 1810. He spent the remainder of his life as a local preacher, but unchanging in his opposition to the immersionists and to a union with the New England Christians.²⁶

The annual General Meeting had been the principal governing body of all the southern Christians from Pennsylvania to Georgia since 1794, and O'Kelly was its acknowledged leader. After the 1810 division some of the churches ceased to affiliate with the body called "O'Kellyites," but transacted their business solely at district or quarterly conferences. This was especially true in the eastern sections of Virginia and North Carolina where eventually two distinct General Conferences would be formed.

Notwithstanding the unhappy state among southern Christians, Elias Smith attended the 1811 General Meeting at Salem, in Caroline County, Virginia, and presented a proposal of union with the New England brethren. Joseph Thomas, Mills Barrett, Zahariah Holloway, and an Elder Hays of South Carolina, were among those present. It seems unlikely that James O'Kelly attended.²⁷ No organizational union was approved at the meeting but, regardless of O'Kelly's dis-

approval, an agreement was reached to continue a fellowship between the New England and southern Christians through correspondence and visitation. This arrangement lasted for several years during which time some of the northern elders made missionary tours into the South and representatives from Virginia attended some of the northern Conferences.²⁸

Elias Smith was chagrined over his failure to effect an organic union with the southerners, and again the blame for the failure was heaped on the weary shoulders of the long-suffering O'Kelly. Under the headline, "Virginia in an Uproar!," the editor of the *Herald of Gospel Liberty* explained to his readers:

- ✓ The following from a Brother in Virginia, to his friend in Philadelphia, will give them some idea of the state of affairs there, since that meeting. It is stated that Mr. O'Kelly endeavoured to prevent a union between the brethren in the North and South. The brother says, "The church near me, is in peace; Mr. O'Kelly has written them a letter, but they pay no attention to it.—Wherever the Christian name is professed, the churches prosper; but where Mr. O'Kelly prevails, they are cold as ice, and hard as stone."²⁹

The uproar was not confined to the Old Dominion, for Frederick Plummer and John Gray toured North Carolina preaching baptism by immersion and advocating their own theological concepts and practices. Gray wrote to Smith in 1812 from the capital city of Raleigh that his preaching "has caused a general *stir* among the people; not only in this City, but in the vicinity."³⁰

Not content to promote his concepts solely from the pulpit, John Gray also wrote a pamphlet: "*A Sketch of the Doctrine and Practise of the People in the United States Called Christians, Who Consider Christ Their Only Master, Lord and Lawgiver, and the New Testament Their Only Rule.*" In his exposition the author explained his concepts:

We do not believe the modern notions of original sin, *viz.* that on account of Adam's being a sinner, "his sin is imputed unto us, and we thereby are subject to the miseries of this life, yea and the pains of hell forever." This would be *unscriptural, unreasonable, and unjust!!* Original sin once did exist; but not now.

....

We believe that Christ is the Son of God;—the Mediator between God and men; but this is not enough to be styled orthodox among the modern *theologists*; we must believe in the Trinity; and what do they mean by the Trinity? As it is not once mentioned in the Scriptures, we must go to the notions of men for its explanation; and if I understand their meaning it is, that there are three Gods, and that these three Gods make one God, which they call the Trinity. Then we do not believe in the Trinity.

....

We do not consider Baptism as essential to Salvation; but one of the commands of Jesus, and also the answering of a good con-

science in the sight of God. Baptism is understood to be the right only of believers; consequently infants are excluded from it. Baptism is also considered to mean, (not as many suppose) *pouring, sprinkling, &c. &c.* according to the notions of many people, but according to the scriptures, a BURIAL IN BAPTISM,—Rom. vi. 4. & Colossians ii. 12.³¹

Both Mills Barrett and his father, Burwell Barrett, who had been one of the seceders with O'Kelly, were so impressed with Gray that they requested him to immerse them in 1814. The younger Barrett then appraised the entire tract in a letter to Elias Smith:

Three things which have agitated the mind of the public considerably in this quarter, are now rejected by many, as being not according to the Scriptures; *Viz.*—The TRINITY, ETERNAL MISERY, and INFANT BAPTISM, *so called* . . . Bro. Gray has published and distributed a pamphlet of 96 pages, in which he has (as many of us think) effectually refuted both the *co-equality* and *pre-existence* of Christ. The effects of this publication has already appeared in these parts; some who have long believed the *Trinity* have changed their opinion, and I learn by a letter from *North Carolina* that it has produced similar effects there.³²

The rejection of infant baptism by Gray and Barrett was in direct contrast with the concept of James O'Kelly, who approved the rite when he wrote:

Let our apostle (Paul) tell us about infant's right to baptism, although the father or mother were or should be an infidel, the other became a Christian, the one is sanctified in a federal sense by the other, and the little children federally holy, that is, fit for covenant and, of course, for baptism; as being a seal of the Abrahamic covenant even under the gospel dispensation.³³

Many of O'Kelly's associates agreed with his interpretation of the ceremony of infant baptism and other religious matters but disagreed with those who accepted Gray's theological teaching. As a result, despite the enthusiasm of Mills Barrett, a harmonious Christian union seemed only a remote possibility in 1814.

Problems continued to arise which caused friction and division among the southern Christians. In 1809, the Republican Methodists lost Clement Read (Reed) to the Presbyterians, and thirteen years later Henderson Lee, John Davidson, Samuel Armstead, and Matthew W. Jackson followed him into the same denomination.³⁴ In 1815 John Stark Ravenscroft, who had officiated for years as a lay reader for the Republican Methodists, decided to become a minister. Convinced that the authority for ordination rested upon the apostolic succession, he ignored the Methodist episcopacy and searched elsewhere. He related:

I had to turn my attention to the Protestant Episcopal Church for that deposit of apostolic succession, in which alone verifiable power to minister in sacred things was to be found in these United States.³⁵

This solution was satisfactory to Ravenscroft who received an amicable dismissal from the Republican Methodists and who later became the highly respected Protestant Episcopal Bishop of North Carolina.

The growth of the Christians in the South was severely impeded by the disintegration which took place in the early years of their existence. The frustrated O'Kelly made every possible attempt to prevent the decline and promote the expansion of the fellowship. He used his pulpit for the purpose as frequently as his advanced age would permit. This service did not involve the traveling formerly necessary, for in 1803 John Scott executed a deed for one acre of land:

to the said O'Kelly & the Christian Church collectively for the particular purpose of erecting a Meeting House to be occupied by way of preaching and expounding the Word of the Lord.³⁶

O'Kelly Chapel, built as a result of this gift, is generally acknowledged to be the first church building erected by the southern Christians. The exact date of its construction is uncertain but when completed it housed a congregation organized earlier in 1794. The chapel was located near the preacher's home in Chatham County, North Carolina. The minister also made vigorous use of his pen and *The Divine Oracles Consulted: or an Appeal to the Law and Testimony*; then *Letters From Heaven Consulted*, and *The Prospect Before Us*, in addition to a hymn book were all published during this period.³⁷

There was expansion in spite of division. James Haw, a Methodist Episcopal minister who had seceded with O'Kelly, Rice and David Haggard, and perhaps others, pursued missionary work in Tennessee and Kentucky successfully. Some of these Christians became affiliated with the Presbyterians during the Great Revival of 1800.³⁸ After Barton W. Stone led a secession from the Presbyterians in 1803, many of the followers of Haw and the Haggards joined him and, using the name "Christian," became a part of the general Christian connection. All was apparently harmonious with these westerners until Alexander Campbell founded the Disciples of Christ and began expanding in the same territory. Abraham Snethen, who preached in the west during most of his life, explained the situation:

The Campbellites came preaching *union, union*, and claiming that they based their doctrine on the Bible, and that there was no essential difference between them and us. This as I have said, made great trouble for our ministers, for we believed and taught the same thing they did except that we did not interpret the Bible,

only each for himself, and hence could not endorse the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins, except to the extent of allowing any one who really believed it, to enjoy and practice his belief undisturbed by others. So far as I have ever known, there has never been a so-called union between the disciples and Christians except where the Christians adopted the Disciples' peculiar doctrines and practices; that is, uniting with a body of believers who exclude from their membership all who do not believe exactly as they do.³⁹

Regardless of objections of this kind, in 1832 Campbell and Stone united their organizations although many of the latter's adherents refused to use the name "Disciples" and continued to refer to themselves as "Christians." Furthermore, David Purviance, Clement Nance and others who had been associated with Stone since he left the Presbyterians, refused to join in the merger but moved further into Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana, where they continued to organize Christian congregations which had no connection with the Disciples. Stone, himself, strongly favored retaining the name "Christians," and he argued with Campbell over this and other matters for a decade after the union. The differences between the two had not been fully resolved when Stone died in 1844.⁴⁰

As editor and publisher of the *Christian Messenger*, Barton W. Stone clearly expressed his desire for unity between the western and eastern Christians. Furthermore, he attempted to promote this unity through a lengthy correspondence with the *Christian Palladium*, but Joseph Badger, the editor of the magazine at the time, had begun to lean toward the Unitarians, and he raised many objections to alleged practices of the westerners, including closed communion, the concept of baptism, and use of the name "Disciples." Stone stoutly refuted these arguments in many statements, articles, and letters. Joseph Marsh, Badger's successor in the editorial chair of the *Christian Palladium*, continued the literary debate in a milder manner but proved to be as firmly opposed to a merger as his predecessor had been.⁴¹ The controversy ceased with Stone's death and, though his followers were a part of the Christian connection, no merger of the Disciples and the eastern Christians has ever been consummated, while the congregations which never joined the union eventually became affiliated with either the northern or the southern Christians.

Clement Nance, who had removed from his native Virginia to the Indiana Territory, reported in 1812:

In this new country, there are 4 ordained Ministers, several more not yet ordained, 5 constituted churches, and others shortly to be constituted, and glory be to God above all, the work of the Lord is going on in power,—Christian love, Christian union in the spirit of the brethren.⁴²

The Christians also moved into areas further west and deeper south during the period from 1810 to 1830 and built churches whenever their numbers grew sufficiently to support them. Although many of these scattered groups found survival difficult, they held tenaciously to their Christian principles and maintained their existence until a more effective organization of the Christians in the South brought them assistance and union.

The annual meetings and conferences that were held during the period from 1810 until 1820 were more like religious revivals than business meetings. They were open to all members of the Christian fellowship who wished to attend, and they became increasingly inefficient as a medium for deliberation and decision. Mills Barrett summarized the problem and the solution:

We then commenced the work of organizing the churches, and establishing good order. We first established annual union meetings; in a few years we called those meetings conferences, but yet they were of the promiscuous order, the doors open for everybody that chose to attend; hence, in a crowded house, it was hard telling who were and were not members of the conference . . . We finally adopted a constitution, which organizes the conferences by a delegation from the churches, and limits the number of representatives, and declares no articles of faith shall ever be established by the conference. After we were thus established, or had established order among us, we were united, we prospered, and we began to feel that we were growing strong in the cause of the good order.⁴³

No records have survived prior to 1828 of the annual General Meeting of the Christians which presumably was held periodically after the original meeting in 1794, and which later became known as the North Carolina and Virginia Conference. This was the parent organizational body of the southern Christians. The proceedings of the Virginia Conference, which changed its name to the Eastern Virginia Conference in 1838, are extant. An agreement was reached to organize this body during quarterly meeting at Holy Neck Chapel, Virginia, in 1817. The following year a second meeting was held at the same place, and September 25 through 27, 1819, a union session met at Cypress Chapel, in Nansemond County, Virginia. Mills Barrett presided and Nelson Millar served as the "scribe." Also present were Burwell Barrett, Joshua Livesay, Nathaniel P. Tatem, James Warren and John Livesay, ministers, and John Harold, Thomas Holiday [Holloway], Stephen Smith, Abraham Harrold, Harred Burts and John Copeland, laymen. The following assignment of preachers to the churches was approved:

Nathaniel P. Tatem
Joshua Livesay

Providence and Craney Island
Bear Quarter and Deep Creek

Mills Barrett
 Burwell Barrett
 Francis Williamson

Wills, Lebanon, and Republican Chapel
 Joyner's, Barrett's, and Holiways
 Bethel and Holy Neck⁴⁴

The Minutes included a statement of belief which reaffirmed the choice of the name "Christian" for the Church; the Scriptures were to be the only "book of discipline"; communion should be open to all followers of Jesus Christ regardless of denominational affiliation; and the members should support the Church financially. The fifth provision, numbered "3" in the record, dealt with doctrine:

3rd. That the opinions of a Brother should not be sufficient reason for the church to reject him, provided his sentiments did not endanger the fundamental Doctrines of Christianity: Ro. 14, hence some are Socinians, and others Trinitarians in sentiment, yet the utmost harmony prevails, and each one observes the ordinances agreeable to his own judgment. Therefore we find, that while a few have been sprinkled, the greater part have been buried with their adorable Saviour in a watery grave, and still the unity of the Spirit abounds in the bonds of love.⁴⁵

The acceptance by the Christians of such a variety of religious beliefs and sacramental practices was astounding and it is difficult to understand how the utmost harmony prevailed. In the case of baptism, while the majority of the Conference preferred immersion the choice of mode was left up to the individual. This sanction of choice became general in respect to all Scriptural interpretations and continued to be approved by the Christian Church in the South throughout its existence. Thus, occasional dissension was prevented from becoming actual division and the authorization of freedom of choice made the Christians ever reluctant to commit themselves to a more definite set of written principles.

The Virginia Conference continued its policy of innovation and in 1825 adopted a constitution which was a step almost undreamed of among the Christians, and which became the subject of a lengthy controversy. It stipulated among other provisions that future assemblies should consist only of delegated representatives of the churches "in the lower part of Virginia."⁴⁶ The real core of the document was contained in the second article, which stated:

II. All power to establish rules for the better government of the churches, shall be vested in conferences, which shall be composed of messengers or delegates chosen by the individual churches.⁴⁷

Mills Barrett, the secretary of the Conference, sent the document to the *Gospel Luminary* for publication. David Millard, the editor of the periodical, obligingly printed it, then added a lengthy criticism

of the need for such a guide. He singled out Article II for the following comment:

We think the object of Conferences ought not to be the making of rules for churches, but to council in wisdom, and see that the *rule* already made [the New Testament], is strictly enforced and adhered to. We confess we entertain fears of guaranteeing to any Conference, Council or Synod, the prerogative of making rules for the regulation of churches, as the history of past ages present a black page upon this subject.⁴⁸

Millard's critique was answered by a pamphlet, published in Norfolk, Virginia, with the imposing title of *Constitution of the Virginia Christian Conference vindicated; in a letter to the members of the Christian Churches in Virginia; suggested by certain criticisms on the same by Elder David Millard, of West Bloomfield N. Y. Editor of the Gospel Luminary. By Amicus Constitutionis*, which was sent to the editor accompanied by a lengthy letter signed "Amicus Veritas Dei." This entire communication was published in the *Luminary*, prefaced by a dignified editorial comment.⁴⁹

Other comments, both pro and con, were soon forthcoming, including one from Joshua Livesay, who had "subscribed" to the constitution when it was adopted, confessed that he had been erroneous in his judgment and regretted the "dark and cloudy hour" when the action was taken. He had decided that the Eastern Virginia Conference "seemed to apprehend an awful deficiency in the holy Scriptures, in point of government!" "To remedy this evil, and to finish that part of the Lord's work which it is supposed he left unfinished," he wrote, "we adopted a CONSTITUTION for the government of conference."⁵⁰ Mills Barrett replied to Livesay, and the interchange continued sporadically with various participants joining in the debate until 1838. At the Eastern Virginia Conference, which met that year at Barrett's Chapel in Southampton County, Virginia, a motion was made to abrogate the Constitution. The presiding officer refused to allow a vote to be taken, but was replaced by a temporary chairman who did permit it. By a 7-5 ballot, the document was rejected. The accusation was made that the constitution had been "illegally destroyed," and the matter was voted on again when the Conference held a second meeting at Antioch, Isle of Wight County. The decision was the same and constitutional church government rejected for the time, although it was revived in a modified form in 1872.⁵¹

Massachusetts and New Jersey were the only two Christian Conferences to draft constitutions other than the Virginians, and those two contained only a few simple rules of order. Joseph Badger, the editor of the *Christian Palladium*, considered both "rather useless lumber upon the hands of our brethren in those sections where they

exist."⁵² The most significant result of the governmental instrument was that the publicity given the lengthy controversy over its creation impeded union with other Christian groups. The Eastern Virginia Conference continued its activities despite friction among its members over the document, and continued to take the lead in conceiving and promoting new ideas and programs for the Christian fellowship.

James O'Kelly apparently considered the Virginia Conference as separate and apart from his Christian following. The General Meeting of the Christians, which included churches in both North Carolina and Virginia and met alternately in both states, was to him the only legal ruling body of the southern Christians. The Virginians differed in that they regarded their Conference as simply a division of the Christian connection, which simplified the transaction of their business because its churches were located in a more restricted geographical area. Because of the death of O'Kelly in 1826, the following year seemed a propitious time for the eastern Virginians to extend the olive branch accompanied by a proposal for recognition to the Christians in North Carolina and upper Virginia. Mills and Burwell Barrett were appointed to attend the next General Meeting held in that state "by preachers and brethren who were in connection with James O'Kelly to bring about a greater union among us."⁵³ The father and son team did not visit the session at O'Kelly Chapel but instead sent a friendly letter to the meeting. In 1829 the messengers informed the Virginia Conference that no official reply to their letter had been received and "report say our letter was treated with contempt."⁵⁴ After this abortive attempt to consider a merger, the two bodies continued to function separately and in 1830 the term "Eastern" was added to the Virginia organization, which thereafter became known as the Eastern Virginia Conference.

It was the Virginia group which kept in touch with the New England Christians by means of correspondence and by occasionally sending fraternal delegates to northern conferences. Nelson Millar represented the Virginia Conference at a General Conference October 20, 1820, at Windham, Connecticut. Following this event, a *Register* was published which contained "an imperfect account of Elders and Churches in our fellowship in the United States," in which North Carolina is not mentioned, but the following Virginia list was published:

Elder Nathaniel P. Tatem, Norfolk Co.
 Joshua Livesay, do. do.
 Nelson Millar, do. do.
 John Livesay, Nancemond County
 Burwell Barrett, Southampton County
 James Warren, Surrey Co.
 Mills Barret, Isle of Wight Co.

Daniel Whitty. do. do.

Frances Williamson, Hertford Co. N. C.

Churches in Virginia in fellowship,

Providence, in Norfolk county,

Bar Quarter, do. do.

Deep Creek, do. do.

Crary Craney Island, do. do.

Cypress, in Nancemond County,

Holy Neck, do. do.

Barretts, Southampton County,

Joyners, do. do.

Holliways, Sussex do.

Lebanon, Surry do.

Wells, Isle of Wight do.

Republican Chapel, do.

Bethel, Hertford County, N. C.⁵⁵

In 1821, the third United States General Annual Conference was held in September at New-Bedford, Maine, and a *Register* published after the meeting. Benjamin Bullock, a visiting elder from New England, was added to the Virginia list which otherwise was unchanged, but the publication also included the following entry for North Carolina:

Elders in the Christian Connexion [Connection], in North Carolina.

John Hays Wake County.

Benjamin Rofe, do.

Little John Itley [Utley] do.

Richard Gunter, Chatham, do.

Unordained—John Barham, Wake Co.

Churches in N. C.

Bethel, city of Raleigh, Wake county.

Pleasant Spring, do.

Piny grove, do.

Red Hill, do.

Juniper Meeting H. Johnson do.

Salem do. do.

Goshen, Sampson do. do.

Union Meeting H. Chatham do.

These North Carolina churches were not those associated with O'Kelly but another group which had been formed under the leadership of Richard Gunter, who left the Baptists because of his opposition to closed communion. Being a confirmed believer in immersion, Gunter parted with the O'Kelly fellowship after the Pine Stake controversy over baptism in 1810. His followers became known generally as "Christian baptists" and may have remained in association with William Guirey, though this has not been substantiated. John Hayes explained the situation in a letter written in 1825:

Preachers are scarce, and among the few, James O'Kelly and some others, will not fellowship those who baptize by immersion. They have lately declared no fellowship with Willis Beaves, for believing Christ inferior to the Father; and brother Gunter for baptizing by immersion.⁵⁷

Hayes also included some interesting statistics in his letter:

Goshen and Juniper Meeting-house, Benjamin Rose, Pastor, number of members 20. Cross Road and Pleasant Spring Meeting-house, John Hayes, Pastor, number of members 30. Sweet Spring and Salem Meeting-house, L. Utley Pastor, number of members, about 30—Pleasant Grove and Mount Gilead, R. Gunter Pastor, number of members 50. Piny Grove, Henry B. Hayes Pastor, number of members 13.⁵⁸

John Hayes wrote that the Annual Meeting of his fellowship in 1825 was held at Pleasant Spring Meeting House, but he gave no details of the conference.⁵⁹ The earliest known detailed proceedings of his group are the Minutes of their Annual Conference and General Meeting at Bell's Meeting House, Chatham County, North Carolina, on October 2-4, 1829. The elders present were J. Hayes, R. Gunter, L. Utley, J. Heath and H. B. Hayes, the secretary. Licentiates Joel Clifton and F. Rollins were present, and J. Moore "of the F. Baptist connexion." The main item of business on the agenda was a proposal to continue correspondence with the "F. Baptist." This was passed and delegates were elected to attend the next conference of that body.⁶⁰

In 1836 the Christians in fellowship with Hayes met at Pleasant Grove in Chatham County, North Carolina, and voted to continue a relation by correspondence with the Virginia Christian Conference.⁶¹ At a later date Hayes and his associates formed the North Carolina Christian Conference. Negotiations were begun with the North Carolina and Virginia Conference which culminated in 1853 with a proposal to join that body. The proposal was approved and the following year the North Carolina Christian Conference was dissolved as its membership merged with the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference. The rolls of the latter were thus increased by Littlejohn Utley, William Rollins, H. B. Hayes, James J. Hobby, Anthony Franks, N. Barber, and John Hateley, ministers, and W. N. Bragg, licentiate; with the following churches: Raleigh, Wilmington, Pleasant Hill, Pleasant Spring (now Catawba Springs), Shallow Well, Moore's Union, Christian Chapel, Pleasant Grove, Bethel, and Zion.⁶²

The records of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference begin with the year 1828, when twenty ministers convened at Union Meeting House in Orange County, North Carolina, from September 25th through 30th. This group is presumably the same which had been

meeting periodically since 1794 as the General Meeting of the Christians, and although no minutes exist of meeting prior to the adoption of the new name, the body can justly be called the oldest governmental body of the southern Christians. Thomas Reeves was the moderator and John P. LeMay served as secretary. The Minutes are of "the General Meeting of the Christian Church," and the appellation "North Carolina and Virginia Conference" was not used in the records until 1843, although it may have been in general use at an earlier date. The ministers who attended the session in September 1830, at New Providence Meeting House in Orange (now Alamance) County, North Carolina, were Jarratt W. Cook, Sr., Thomas Reeves, Joseph H. Bland, Philemon White, George Swift, John P. LeMay, Jarrat W. Cook, Jr., Robert Prather, John Lambeth, Thomas J. Fowler, Sterling W. Fowler, John Hanks, and Daniel W. Kerr, elders, and John Walker, Wesley W. Paschall and Lewis Craven, who were unordained at the time. In the 1832 meeting at Lebanon, in Surry County, Virginia, the decision was made that churches should send "chosen men" as delegates to future conferences. The organization was solvent though hardly affluent, for the treasurer reported a balance of \$46.67 on hand.⁶³

The 1842 *Christian Register* listed the following statistical information about the North Carolina and Virginia Conference:

Preachers	
Jonathan Fuller	William J. Berryman
Joseph H. Bland	James G. Martin
John T. Petty	John D. Berryman
Shubael G. Evans	W. Crank
Sterling W. Fowler	Thomas J. Drumwright
Stephen Turner	Thomas E. Jester
Thomas Reeves	John P. Lemay
Daniel W. Kerr	Thomas J. Fowler
Lewis Craven	Thomas C. Moflit
Solomon Apple	John Lambreth
Joseph A. Murray	Robert R. Prather
Alfred Apple	Lovick Lambreth
Alfred Isley	Ashbel S. Nelson
George G. Walker	Henry B. Wilson
Edward T. Berryman	
Jesse J. Cole	<i>Thomas Pool</i>
No. of Churches	11
No. of Preachers	11
No. of unordained Preachers ⁶⁴	

The Minutes for 1844 contain the first complete list of the churches in the Conference:

Huffines
Christian Union

Liberty (Caswell)	Hank's Chapel
Pope's Chapel	Concord
Pisgah	New Providence
Mount Zion	Fuller
Staunton River	Antioch
Shiloh	Sharon
Arbor	Providence
Pleasant Hill	Liberty Grove
Liberty	Shiloh
Union (Orange)	O'Kelly's Chapel
Apple's Chapel	Bethlehem
Union (Va.)	Pleasant Grove
New Salem	Good Hope
Kedar	Wilson's
Pleasant Grove	Hepzibah
Concord	Christian Chapel
Bray's Chapel	Reese's Chapel ⁶⁵

As geographical descriptions were not always recorded, it is impossible to differentiate between two churches with the same name.

Elder Christy Sine recorded in his diary that there were already Christian Churches in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia when he arrived in 1823, and he welcomed the annual visits of Joseph Thomas to assist him in his ministry. Isaac N. Walter also made periodic visits for a number of years to the region.⁶⁶ The Christian fellowship in the Shenandoah Valley probably originated during the 1820 missionary visit of James O'Kelly and had remained in existence since that date. By 1832 the Christians were holding frequent General Meetings, which were more for revival purposes than for business, and Sine enthusiastically reported an increasing number of converts on these occasions. The steady growth of the fellowship eventually made a union organization desirable. As a result on August 27, 1838, in Frederick County, Virginia, the Christian Conference of the Valley in Virginia was formed. The body was to include the churches in the counties of Hampshire, Morgan, Frederick, Shenandoah, Rockingham, Augusta, Rockbridge, Page and Green. W. G. Proctor was the first moderator, with Christy Sine the first clerk. The initial meeting was held in November of that same year, and attended by W. G. Proctor, John Zahn, Christy Sine, J. N. Hiett, W. Bowman, and F. G. Miller, the latter from the Ohio Central Conference. Plans were formulated for the churches to be represented by appointed delegates, and a committee was appointed to correspond with Christians in Allegany County, Maryland, and Bedford County, Pennsylvania, "to endeavor to effect a union of those churches with this Conference."⁶⁷

The Virginia Valley churchmen evidently desired growth and expansion for the 1840 Conference appointed representatives to visit the

Norfolk (Eastern Virginia) Conference "for the purpose of forming a more intimate acquaintance with them in order to [secure] our cooperation."⁶⁸ Three years later the Valley Conference was held in Bedford County, Pennsylvania, and the 1846 meeting was appointed for the same place.⁶⁹ The proximity of the growing Christian denomination founded by Alexander Campbell attracted some of the Valley congregations and several churches and two ministers joined Campbell's followers. The weakened Valley Conference disbanded in 1849, but was succeeded by the Central Christian Conference of Virginia, organized in August of that same year. The approximate membership of three hundred fifty was served by Elders Joseph T. Robinson, Simon (Simeon) Ward, John Alerman (previously recorded as Casper Allemang), James Long and George Cline. The churches included Antioch, Salem and Bethlehem in Rockingham County; Liberty in Page County, Edinburgh and Power Fort in Shenandoah County; and Timber Ridge in Hampshire County.⁷⁰

In 1823 the *Christian Register* included the following item:

There is one Christian Conference in Kentucky, one in Tennessee, and three in Ohio, viz. the Miami, the dear [Deer] Creek and the Athens Conference.⁷¹

Both the Kentucky and Tennessee Conferences were probably the result of the missionary labors of James Haw and the two Haggards around the turn of the century. In 1910 Z. T. Thacker jubilantly reported to the *Herald of Gospel Liberty* that "*The one hundred and sixth session of the Kentucky Christian Conference has passed,*"⁷² indicating an origin possibly as early as 1804. However, the earliest detailed record found is of a meeting on September 24, 1840, in Fleming County in the Blue Grass state. This was obviously not the initial conclave, and no clue is given in the Minutes as to the age of the organization. John Office was selected to be the President and Z. Tyree to serve as Clerk. In addition to the officers, those present were John James, John I. Wallace, Z. M. Landsdown, A. Rice, elders, and R. Choat, licentiate. James Richard and E. Rice were absent. The report of the Minutes included the following statement by the President:

. . . our condition is bettered; whereas we were a scattered, unorganized and to some extent disheartened few, hearing a sermon once in a while, we are now (we think) apostolically embodied. The number of our names are together: we know who we are, and have endeavored to build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; builded together as a habitation for God to dwell in, thro' the spirit, so that we are strong in faith, giving glory to God.⁷³

In August, 1826, a Christian Conference met near Murfreesborough, Tennessee, and the enrollment reported:

The names of the Elders in that Conference are as follows: John Bowman, William Moore, Ephraim D. Moore, B. F. Hall, William D. Jourdan, Abner Hall, James Y. Green, John Hooton, Francis A. Stone, Robert Randolph, Mansel W. Matthews, William Clapp, Robert Bates, John Northcross, James Northcross, John O. Scott, Perseus E. Harris, John M. Barnet, John Roberts, James E. Matthews, Crocket McDonald, John McDonald, Elisha Price, Elisha Randolph, John Parkhill, Thatcher Griffin, Lorenzo Griffin, William D. Cains, Andrew Davis, John Green, Abner Peeler, John Mulky, Philip Mulky, Willis Hudleston, William Gilbreath, Samuel D. Dewit, James Griffiee, John McCartney, Robert Pedigo, Robert Leeper, _____ Stover, Elisha Randolph, Isaac Mulky, William Chaffin, _____ Johnson. The unordained preachers are, John Ward, Richard Lane, Calloway M'Gee, Henry Hays, &c.⁷⁴

The account of the meeting also stated that congregations in Tennessee and Alabama were numerous and increasing. In 1830 J. M. Barnett announced a meeting of the Western District Christian Conference at Gordon's Ferry, in Hickman County, Tennessee, indicating the possibility of two organizations in the state at that time.⁷⁵

In Alabama, a Conference met on August 18, 1827, near Florence, in Jackson County, and the account of the meeting included:

I subjoin the names of the preachers belonging to this Conference.

ORDAINED.—Elisha Price, John H. Parkhill, Elisha Randolph, Mansel W. Matthews, John M'Daniel, Thacker V. Griffin, Isaac Mulkey, William Clap, Crocket M'Daniel, Robert Baits, Jonathan Wallis, James E. Matthews, Reuben Mardis, E. D. Moore.

UNORDAINED.—James Anderson, Lorenzo D. Griffin, Jonathan G. Ward, Wm. J. Price, Mm. W. Wilson, Andrew Rusel, Jonathan Parker.⁷⁶

In view of the duplication of some of the names on both rolls, it is apparent that some of the Georgia elders had removed to Alabama, or else the Conference included members residing in both states.

It is impossible to differentiate between the Christians who joined the Disciples and those who continued in connection with the fellowship in North Carolina and Virginia. There were also scattered congregations in Texas, Louisiana, and South Carolina, but no evidence has been found of a conference organized prior to 1855.⁷⁷ The Ohio Conferences continued to develop and their members were listed in the *Register* in 1842.⁷⁸

In 1817 the *Herald of Gospel Liberty* received the following report of affairs in Georgia from Jacob Calahen [Calahan, Callahan]:

The names of preachers are the following; viz. Elders Coleman Pendleton, George L. Smith, Samuel Ward, Archibald Stanford, Thomas Jordan, James Walker, Murrel Pledge, Thomas Hallon, Peter L. Jackson, Isaac A. Burke, myself, John Holland, Arthur Dupray [Dupree], William Fears, Ishmael Davis, George Parker. These are not Elders, all of whom are settled except myself. As to the number of brethren, I am not able to give you an account, as they are scattering; and some of them live where I do not travel.⁷⁹

In 1820, when Zachariah Holloway (Holliway) moved his residence from Virginia to Georgia, the Virginia Conference directed him to devote his efforts toward promoting union among the Christians in his new home.⁸⁰ The Georgia congregations were presumably formed by members of the Christian fellowship moving south from other states, and Callahan had already testified that they were scattered and struggling for growth. As a result of Holloway's success within the first two years of his ministry, the church at Lebanon, Georgia, wrote to the Virginia Conference:

Brethren, we wish to let you know, that we have appointed a yearly meeting at Lebanon on the Friday before the first Sunday in May next, and we do heartily wish that some of the Elders and preachers to visit us at that time, with as many of the other Brethren as can attend. Bro. Holoway whose labours has been considerably blessed lately can tell you—⁸¹

In 1829 the editor of the *Gospel Luminary* received letters informing him of the slow but steady growth of the Christian fellowship in Georgia. Jacob Callahan reported from Walton County, and James Butts from DeKalb, Jackson, and Pike Counties. In the same year Arthur Dupree wrote from northwestern Georgia that an annual conference was held in addition to frequent camp meetings. "In the bounds of my circuit there are twenty-three churches, or congregations," he wrote. "These churches, it is thought, will, upon an average, number twenty five members of good standing."⁸² From this encouraging beginning, the Christian fellowship spread until the Georgia Conference included newly organized congregations in the adjacent state of Alabama. No official records have been found of the activities of these churches for the ensuing two decades. The influx of "Campbellites" rapidly gained strength in the area and swept most of the other Christians into their ranks. Holloway himself finally became a minister with the Disciples. The Conference simply disintegrated about the year 1838 as its membership dwindled.⁸³

Although their ranks were severely decimated, a small group remained members of the Christian Church in the South, and their numbers were gradually increased as more newcomers arrived in both states. This reinforcement encouraged the organization of the

Georgia Christian Conference on September 9, 1851. Meeting at Liberty Church near Milledgeville, Jacob Calahan was chosen moderator and Levin J. Smith clerk. Among the seventeen members present were James, John T., and Francis D. O'Kelly, relatives of James O'Kelly, the founder.⁸⁴ The first two were ordained at the organizational meeting; the latter three years later. In addition to the Liberty Church, Christian Union, Cook's Meeting House, and a church at John Goldin's were the other Conference congregations.⁸⁵

In 1853 the Georgia and Alabama Christian Conference was organized at the home of Jacob Calahan to replace the old Conferences and provide a union for the churches in both states. No records have been preserved prior to 1855, when the meeting was held at New Hope in Chambers County, Alabama. G. L. Smith, William I. Manning, W. J. M. Elder, M. Park, D. Cogans, J. O. Barber, and W. B. King were among those present. Later in the same year Mr. Manning wrote to *The Christian Sun*:

Eight years ago, the name Bible Christians was not known in this part of the country. But thank the Lord the little spark that fell in these parts was kindled up and produced a great flame. The Christian cause is onward. We pray the Lord to send forth more laborers in this part of his vineyard.⁸⁶

About the year 1848 a Conference was organized in Missouri. The Minutes of the 1849 meeting have been preserved and record the election of David McClure to the presidential chair; William U. Cook was secretary.⁸⁷ The Minutes of 1854 include considerably more detail. Daniel Albright was chairman of the conference and Philip E. Gill secretary. The churches represented were Antioch, Union, Jackson, Oak Forest, Jasper, and Elk Horn. In addition to the two officials, the churchmen who attended were Joel Albright, Isaac Cook, Hirman Whitesell, William Sharpe, William A. Klapp, Alfred Chittim, Emsley W. Craven, Hiram Parks, John W. Luke, William H. Albright, Samuel Hargraves, Nicholas Lanear, J. N. Barker, James A. Whitsett, Joshua Albright, Isaac Holloman, Thomas B. Abernathy, Richard Houser, John Spencer, Frederick Miller, Alexander Sigart, David McLore, James H. Gant, Bartlett Estes, Archibald Glasscock, John Walker, Hardy Holloman, George McCullough, Ralph Faucett, James Walker, and William R. Pettus. A total of 322 members was reported to the Conference.⁸⁸

The progress of the early conferences was encouraging and many of the churches organized survived, but the Christian Church did not grow extensively nor become a significant part of the religious life of any of the southern states that it achieved in North Carolina and Virginia. The Church was relatively small numerically, with limited manpower and funds for missionary activities and church extension.

In addition, the followers of Campbell and Stone attracted many into their fellowship, and the accelerated efforts of the Baptists and Methodists after the Great Revival of 1800 attracted large numbers to their churches. Despite these hindrances to growth, the Church survived and had devout and faithful members in numerous states where its membership was small.

Milo True Morrill, in his *History of the Christian Denomination in America*, explained that there were three types of conferences: first, one whose authority ended when the session adjourned; second, one which maintained a permanent clerk and kept statistical records; and third, one which exercised authority during the entire year through an executive committee. Writing in 1912, he explained:

Organized delegated conferences were regarded askance by many who feared loss of independence for individuals and churches. Some older men vigorously expressed fears that dearly bought liberty was about to be forfeited. But safeguarding the ministry and churches outweighed all fears, and Christian conferences have been multiplying for nearly one hundred years.⁸⁹

Regardless of which type was used for the organization of the conference, the transaction of the business of the member churches was the purpose for the meeting. Throughout the nineteenth century the Christians assigned territories to preachers who preferred an itinerancy or approved local pastorates for the elders. In the latter cases sanction of the Conference was only granted when a church requested a certain elder for its pastor. Sometimes a single congregation would "call" a minister to be their resident pastor. At other times two or three churches in close proximity would unite in their request for a minister to serve them on a rotation basis. No preacher could be forced to accept a pastorate which he was unwilling to undertake. The principal authority of the Conference primarily lay in the right to reprimand the elder for misconduct and dismiss him from the fellowship if this was deemed advisable. The Conference was a necessity, for it served as the clearing house for all the religious affairs of the Christians.

No exact list of the names and numbers of the various conferences can be compiled because the records of many of them have not been preserved.⁹⁰ In addition, there were frequent mergers, changes of territorial boundaries, and changes of name. Neither is it possible to determine the total membership of the southern Christians in the first half of the nineteenth century, although the increase in the number of known conferences is proof that the fellowship was growing. As the numerical size increased in a widening territory, a closer organic union became more and more desirable. The North Carolina and Virginia Conference and the Eastern Virginia Conference were the

two most stable organizations of the Christians, and it was to them that the newer and smaller units looked for leadership. Mills Barrett had succeeded his father, Burwell Barrett, in the employ of the latter Conference to travel as a supervisory itinerant, which was an executive position comparable to the office later created and known as the Superintendent of the Southern Christian Convention. Barrett considered communication with other conferences to be a part of his duties and made a notable effort to keep in contact by correspondence with the various congregations, constantly reminding them that they were not isolated Christian bodies but segments of a larger fellowship. Others joined in the effort to maintain communication until an official church paper could be established to serve that purpose. The valiant efforts of all who strove to preserve unity between the Conferences can hardly be valued too highly, because it was from these organizations consolidated into one fellowship that the Christian Church in the South would arise.

Footnotes

- ¹ Simon Addison Bennett, *The Christian Denomination and the Christian Doctrine*, (Dayton, Ohio: The Christian Publishing Association, 1923), 27; Milo True Morrill, *A History of the Christian Denomination in America*, (Dayton, Ohio: The Christian Publishing Association, 1912), 123. Hereinafter cited as Morrill, *Christian Denomination*.
- ² *Herald of Gospel Liberty*, (Portsmouth, New Hampshire), August 2, 1811. Hereinafter cited as *Herald*.
- ³ William Guirey, *The Pattern in the Mount*, (Philadelphia: Privately Printed, Second Edition, 1808), i. Hereinafter cited as Guirey, *Pattern*.
- ⁴ Humphreys, *Memoirs*, 361; Thomas, *Pilgrim*, 25-26.
- ⁵ William Henry Foote, *Sketches of Virginia, Historical and Biographical, Second Series*, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company, 1855), 577-579. Hereinafter cited as Foote, *Sketches of Virginia*.
- ⁶ *The Star*, (Raleigh, North Carolina), December 1, 1808. Hereinafter cited as *Star*.
- ⁷ *Herald*, December 8, 1808.
- ⁸ *Ibid*, May 12, 1809.
- ⁹ *Ibid*, November 10, 1808.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid*, November 24, 1808. No copy of the proposed pamphlet has been found.
- ¹¹ *Star*, January 12, 1809.
- ¹² *Herald*, June 23, 1809.
- ¹³ *Ibid*, November 10, 1808.
- ¹⁴ Thomas, *Pilgrim*, 44.
- ¹⁵ *Herald*, May 12, 1809.
- ¹⁶ John Paris, *History of the Methodist Protestant Church: Giving A General View of the Causes and Events That Led to the Organization of that Church: and a More Particular Account of Transactions in North Carolina, Never Before Published*, (Baltimore: Printed by Sherwood and Company, 1849), 408. The source Paris used for the incident he related was an account published in 1828 by Leonard Prather, a minister who was later discredited by the Christians. See William Brock Wellons, *The Christians, South, Not Unitarians In Sentiment*, (Suffolk, Virginia: Office of the Christian Sun, 1860), 26-30. Hereinafter cited as Wellons, *Christians, South*.
- ¹⁷ James O'Kelly, *Letters From Heaven Consulted*, (Hillsborough, North Carolina: Printed by Dennis Heartt, 1822), 31.
- ¹⁸ Thomas, *Pilgrim*, 25.
- ¹⁹ *Herald*, June 21, 1811.
- ²⁰ William Guirey, *A Funeral Sermon on the Death of General George Washington, Who Died at Mount Vernon Dec. 14, 1799, Aged 68*, (Salem, Massachusetts: Printed by Joshua Cushing, For the Proprietors, 1800).
- ²¹ *Ibid*, 2.
- ²² *Christian Palladium*, (Union Mills, New York), August 2, 1841. Hereinafter cited as *Palladium*.
- ²³ *Ibid*, August 2, 1841.
- ²⁴ *Ibid*, May 15, 1838.
- ²⁵ MacClenny, O'Kelly, 158.
- ²⁶ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 25.
- ²⁷ *Herald*, October 25, 1811.
- ²⁸ MacClenny, O'Kelly, 165.
- ²⁹ *Herald*, January 17, 1812.
- ³⁰ *Ibid*, May 22, 1812.
- ³¹ John Gray, *A Sketch of the Doctrine and Practise of the People in the United States Called Christians, Who Consider Christ Their Only Master, Lord and Lawgiver, and the New Testament Their Only Rule*, (Philadelphia: Published at the Herald Office, 1811), 11-12, 15, 19-20.

- ³² *Herald*, August 5, 1814.
- ³³ O'Kelly, *Prospect Before Us*, 14.
- ³⁴ Foote, *Sketches of Virginia*, 577-579.
- ³⁵ "Biographical Sketch of the Right Rev. John Stark Ravenscroft, D.D., First Bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina," *The Evergreen*, (New Haven, New York: 1844-1853), June, 1850.
- ³⁶ Chatham County Deed Books, Chatham County Register of Deeds, Chatham County Courthouse, Pittsboro, North Carolina, Deed Book BN, 393.
- ³⁷ James O'Kelly, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs, Designed For The Use of Christians*, (Raleigh, North Carolina: From the Minerva Press by Thomas W. Scott, 1816). The other publications of O'Kelly have already been cited.
- ³⁸ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 34-38, 48-50. Asbury, *Journal*, I, 424.
- ³⁹ Abraham Snethen, *Autobiography of Abraham Snethen, The Barefoot Preacher, Collected and Compiled by Mrs. N. E. Lamb, Corrected and Revised by J. F. Burnett*, (Dayton, Ohio: Christian Publishing Association, 1909), 191.
- ⁴⁰ William Garrett West, *Barton Warren Stone: Early American Advocate of Christian Unity*, (Nashville: The Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 1954), 157, 177, 189-202.
- ⁴¹ *Palladium*, August 16, 1841. *The Christian Messenger*, eds. Barton Warren Stone and Others, 14 Volumes, 1826-1845, (Published irregularly, Georgetown, Kentucky and Jacksonville, Illinois), January 1835, May 1835, and December 1835. Hereinafter cited as *Messenger*.
- ⁴² *Herald*, September 18, 1812.
- ⁴³ *Palladium*, May 15, 1838.
- ⁴⁴ *Minutes of the Virginia Christian Conference, 1817-1830; Minutes of the Eastern Virginia Conference, 1830-1859; Minutes of the General Meeting of the Christian Church, 1828-1842; and Minutes of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference, 1842-1914*, typescript of the original records by Wilbur Ernest MacClenny, Church History Room, Elon College, 4. The original records were lost when the library at Elon College burned January 18, 1923. The typescript is a bound volume with numbered pages, hereinafter cited as *Conferences*. The historical collection at Elon College hereinafter cited as Church History Room.
- ⁴⁵ *Conferences*, 5.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 28.
- ⁴⁷ *The Gospel Luminary*, (West Bloomfield, New York), October 1825. Hereinafter cited as *Luminary*.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid*, October 1825.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid*, May 1826.
- ⁵⁰ *Palladium*, March 1, 1838; May 15, 1838.
- ⁵¹ *Conferences*, 50-51, May 4, 1838, and June 15, 1838. A penned comment in the margin of the Minutes states, "illegally destroyed." See also *The Christian Annual of the Southern Christian Convention for 1872*, (Privately Printed, 1872), 11-12.
- ⁵² *Palladium*, January 15, 1839.
- ⁵³ *Conferences*, 33.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 35.
- ⁵⁵ *The Christian Register, and Almanack: Containing the Astronomical Calculations of an Almanack, for the year 1821: Performed by Nathan Daboll, Likewise A variety of information respecting the Christian Churches: Preachers, &c. in the United States*, (New London, Connecticut: Printed by Samuel Green, 1821), 17-19. The elders were listed as members of the "Norfolk Conference," a name occasionally used to designate the eastern Virginians.
- ⁵⁶ *The Christian Register and Almanack; For the Year of Our Lord 1823*, (Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Published and Printed by Robert Foster, 1823), 46. Hereinafter cited as *Register*, 1823.
- ⁵⁷ *Luminary*, October 1825.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid*.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid*.
- ⁶⁰ *Luminary*, January 1830. "F. Baptist" meant "Free Will Baptist."
- ⁶¹ *Palladium*, December 1, 1836.

- ⁶² *Conferences*, 193.
- ⁶³ *Ibid*, 157-158.
- ⁶⁴ *The Christian Register and Almanack; For the Year of Our Lord 1842*, (Exeter, New Hampshire: Published by A. R. Brown, 1842), 57. Hereinafter cited as *Register*, 1842.
- ⁶⁵ *Conferences*, 157-158.
- ⁶⁶ Christy Sine, *Personal Journal of Elder Christy Sine, 1789-1825*, a one volume diary with no page numbers or exact dates, Church History Room, Elon College. See also Thomas, *Pilgrim*, 99; A. L. McKinney, *Memoir of Eld. Isaac N. Walter*, (Cincinnati: Published by Rickey, Mallory and Webb, 1857), 60-61, 83.
- ⁶⁷ *Palladium*, January 15, 1839. The only extant records of the proceedings of this Conference are those which were published in various periodicals.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid*, November 2, 1840.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid*, October 4, 1843.
- ⁷⁰ *Sun*, July 2, 1851.
- ⁷¹ *Register*, 1823, 46.
- ⁷² *Herald*, October 6, 1910. Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 122.
- ⁷³ *Palladium*, January 1, 1841.
- ⁷⁴ *Messenger*, December 25, 1826.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid*, July 1830.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid*, October 25, 1827.
- ⁷⁷ *Sun*, March 5, 1858; May 16, 1856. See also *Messenger*, July 25, 1827.
- ⁷⁸ *Register*, 1842, 47-51.
- ⁷⁹ *Herald*, June 1817.
- ⁸⁰ *Conferences*, 16.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid*, 23-24.
- ⁸² *Luminary*, February 1830.
- ⁸³ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 94.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 285-286, 297-298.
- ⁸⁵ *Sun*, November 19, 1851.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid*, November 30, 1855.
- ⁸⁷ *Ibid*, September 21, 1849.
- ⁸⁸ *Ibid*, November 8, 1854.
- ⁸⁹ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 126.
- ⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 377, 383-384, 387-391. The author listed all known Christian Conferences, although he did not guarantee the accuracy of the list.

Chapter IV

The Southern Christian Association

Until 1844 the southern Christians had no periodical of their own and were consequently at a disadvantage in communicating with one another. Extensive use was made of the *Herald of Gospel Liberty*, the *Christian Herald*, the *Gospel Luminary*, the *Christian Messenger*, the *Christian Palladium*, and other religious periodicals as media for publishing announcements, conference minutes, and personal letters. The editors generously gave space in their publications to communications from the South, but no one of the papers was devoted primarily to the affairs of the Connection in the southern states. The need was great for an official organ that would be devoted to the interests of the Christians in the South, and that would be widely circulated among the members of the fellowship.

In 1833 the North Carolina General Meeting acknowledged this situation by appropriating fifty dollars to found "the Christian Intelligencer."¹ Plans were made for a semi-monthly paper to cost \$1.50 per annum, and its purpose was announced in 1834 through columns of the *Hillsborough Recorder*:

The Intelligencer shall be devoted to the cause of religion in general, and more particularly, it shall be the medium through which the Christian Church shall make known to the world at large her views in relation to the leading doctrines of the Bible, by correcting erroneous impressions, warding off dangerous censures, and subserving the cause of truth.²

Evidently the response to the advertisement was insufficient to support the project, but the idea did not die. Six years later an attempt was made to launch *The Christian Protestant and Advocate of Union*, to be issued weekly at an annual cost of three dollars. The proposal was

again announced in the Hillsborough newspaper by means of a lengthy exposition on the ideals of the Christian Church and the need for greater unity. It concluded with the statement:

We expect also, to plead the cause of suffering humanity, and, (in behalf of all the rising generation,) to exhibit in its various aspects and bearings, the important subject of education, physical, intellectual and moral; give what impulse we may, to benevolent efforts, and philanthropic enterprise; and lastly, contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.³

Again, the effort was abortive and the paper was never issued.

Discouraged but not defeated, the North Carolina and Virginia Conference continued to seek the promotion of unity through publication. When the 1840 Conference met at Union Meeting House, in Orange (now Alamance) County, North Carolina, a vote was passed to communicate with the *Christian Palladium*, the periodical published in West Bloomfield, New York, and to request the editor to aid the crusade for a united fellowship. The next year, when the Conference met at Apple's Chapel, in Guilford County, North Carolina, it resolved "that there be a union with such northern conferences as have been sanctioned."⁴ The outcome of these negotiations might have been an eventual national merger of the Christians and the plan for a southern periodical might never have been revived had not the agitation over the slavery question arisen to interfere with relations between North and South. William Brock Wellons explained one of the results:

The "Christian Palladium" was once extensively patronized by the Southern Christians, and it was promptly rejected when its columns were opened to abolitionism. This circumstance helped to bring the Christian Sun into existence.⁵

Because of this trend of events, the southerners realized that if they were to have a paper that their people would read, the only solution was to publish it themselves.

Decisive action was taken by the Conference in 1842 when it met in a called session at Union, in North Carolina, and this time the effort was better organized. The name approved for the periodical about to be launched was *The Christian Sun*, and its publication was to be supervised and directed by the Southern Christian Publishing Committee. The twelve members elected to serve on the directorial body were Thomas J. Fowler, Jesse K. Cole, Tapley Petty, Lovick Lambeth, Shubal Evans and Martain Staley, ministers, with James A. Whitsitt, John R. Holt, James Graham, Thomas Lynch, Samuel Hargrove and Bingham Apple, laymen. It was further resolved that the paper be an auxiliary to the *Palladium* which was published "under the control of the Northern Christian Publishing Committee."⁶ It is clear from this decision that hope still existed that harmonious unity

between Christians in the North and South might be achieved while the campaign for southern consolidation was in progress.

The Publishing Committee immediately held a meeting and after electing Thomas Lynch to the chairmanship selected Elder Daniel Wilson Kerr to edit the proposed paper. In addition to his prominence among the Christians as a minister, the Virginia-born Kerr was also widely known as an educator. In 1826 he had served as the principal of the Wake Forest-Pleasant Grove Academy, near Raleigh. Twelve years later he founded Junto Academy, which was first located in rural Orange County, North Carolina, and later moved to Pittsboro in the same state, where Kerr continued to direct its affairs as long as he lived. The *Christian Palladium* had published numerous communications from the elder in which he repeatedly voiced his desire to see the Christian Connection united.⁷ He had been connected with both previous attempts to found a church paper and had never abandoned hope. With the combined cooperation of the Committee and the Conference backing the enterprise, the details were worked out and the goal was reached.

Dated January 1, 1844, but because of a delay in the schedule actually issued on February 17, 1844, the first issue of the *Christian Sun* was released. Printed in Hillsborough, North Carolina, by Dennis Heartt, the first page was headed by the caption, "The Lord is a Sun and Shield." The sixteen pages were eight and three-quarters by six inches in size, and the subscription price of the monthly was one dollar per annum. Editor Kerr appealed to the churches for support in his first editorial:

We have now existed for a considerable length of time as a separate and distinct denomination, yet notwithstanding our principles and views are scarcely known beyond our immediate vicinity. This is the consequence of not having a paper established amongst us in the South. Now, we have a favorable opportunity. Let us not neglect it. We possess all the requisite means, and under the blessing of God, can right ourselves before the world, and can take our true position among the churches of the day. If we are not wanting to ourselves, and recreant to the religious principles we hold, we should put forth all our energies and concentrate all our efforts in the support of the *Christian Sun*.⁸

With that challenge, the publication was launched and began its long and valuable service to the Christians in the South.

During the first half of the nineteenth century only the Virginia Conference maintained any formal relations with the New England Christians. When the announcement was made that on October 27, 1819, a General Conference of Elders and Brethren of the Christian Connexion in the United States would be held at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Nelson Millar was deputized to represent the Virginia

body at the meeting. Whether or not the delegate was able to go to Portsmouth is uncertain as no record of those who attended was kept,⁹ but he did represent his Conference at the next United States General Meeting at Windham, Connecticut, in September of 1820. Millar was assigned a prominent part in the program, being asked both to pray and to preach before the delegation. In addition, the Conference drafted a "Circular" for the delegate to carry back to his brethren in the Old Dominion, congratulating them "on the present flourishing state of the Churches," and praying for "an indissoluble union."¹⁰ Millar was also appointed to be the "messenger" from the Virginia Conference to the next national meeting at New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1821, but did not attend. This brought forth the regrets of the Conference that he "did not arrive to set with us."¹¹ No further mention of sending representatives to a national conference is found in the Virginia Conference Minutes until 1833, when Mills Barrett and Thomas Nash were approved to attend a national meeting in New York City.¹²

The harmonious unity of the Christian Connection was always a goal for which the Christians in Virginia's Tidewater section strove, but they were handicapped in maintaining personal relations with the northern fellowship because of the long distances involved in attending their meetings. The religious magazines were their best media for promoting union, and this they continued to use zealously. The potential of the new publication founded in North Carolina as an instrument for developing closer relations among their southern brethren was immediately apparent to the Eastern Virginia Conference, and when it convened August 2, 1844, at Antioch, in Isle of Wight County, the following resolution was passed:

That the *Christian Sun* printed at Hillsborough, North Carolina is suitably located, conducted in a Christian spirit, well calculated to be a general and lasting benefit to the Christians in the state of North Carolina and merits our confidence and patronage.¹³

This statement plainly revealed that the two major southern Christian Conferences had been brought into closer relationship by a means of communication superior to any that had hitherto existed and which promised greater accomplishments for the future. The advent of the *Christian Sun* was the initial step toward a central organization of the Christians, South.

Editor Kerr was also aware of the power of the press, and he lost no time in wielding his pen to advocate constructive action. In the December, 1846, issue of the periodical he wrote:

Union is strength as well in church as in state. There are many important considerations why the Christians south should unite

together in every desirable way. Their numbers are comparatively small, and they are viewed by the popular sects of the day in the light of heretics, at least, if no worse. Therefore they should concentrate their energies, and stand shoulder to shoulder around their great and fundamental principles, principles for which they have done battle for half a century, and which they feel to be of importance to the prosperity and well-being of the church. Owing to uncontrollable circumstances the Christians south find it impracticable to unite together in one conference, and therefore the next most suitable and effective plan of operation is the formation of a Southern Christian Association, to be composed of the delegates from all the southern Conferences.¹⁴

The reasonableness of this suggestion appealed to the members of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference, which met at Union Chapel, in Orange County, North Carolina, that same year and they entered the following item in their Minutes:

Conference concurred in the plan agitated through the Sun, for establishing a Southern Christian Association, to consist of delegates from all the Christian Conferences South, whose province it will be to correct and mature plans for harmonious action throughout the connection, and also to foster any object of general improvement that may be set forward.¹⁵

It is not surprising that the Eastern Virginia Conference met that same year and appointed delegates to attend a meeting "for the purpose of forming a Southern Christian Association."¹⁶

The creation of the Association might never have materialized had not the southern Christians been thwarted in their efforts to cooperate with their northern brethren by the rise of dissension over the slavery question. When the North Carolina and Virginia Conference met at Apple's Chapel in North Carolina during 1841, authorization was voted for "a union with such northern conferences" as would accept terms agreed upon by a committee of correspondence and Joseph Marsh, the editor of the *Christian Palladium*.¹⁷ Daniel W. Kerr, acting for the committee, negotiated with Marsh and announced:

We can be united, we have no doubt, upon the terms proposed, and the principles laid down in our correspondence, viz: That we shall retain our distinct individuality as a church, and transact our ecclesiastical affairs, receive and administer the ordinances in a manner suitable to our own views, convictions, and feelings, and not at any time be molested or interrupted therein.¹⁸

Marsh accepted these conditions and, after stipulating that the messengers from each section should attend the conferences and conventions, added:

And should you at any time choose to dissolve the union, it will only be necessary to cease to act with us: and each can let that brotherly love *continue* which now exists between us.¹⁹

With the ratification of the proposal by the conferences, prospects seemed very bright indeed for an eventual consolidated Christian Church, but these roseate plans were shattered in 1844 when the New England Convention met in May at Lynn, Massachusetts, and passed the following resolution:

That American slavery is manifestly at war with the spirit of Christianity, a flagrant violation of every precept in the decalogue, and [sic] unprovoked outrage upon human freedom, both civil and religious.

That every slave holder, while the appalling sin of slavery cleaves to him, does, *ipso facto*, fail to exhibit satisfactory evidence of Christian character and that while he persists in the practice of this heaven defying sin, he should not be recognized as a disciple of the Holy Redeemer who came for the express purpose of preaching deliverance to the captive and the opening of prisons to them that are bound.²⁰

The publication of this statement brought forth an indignant reply from Elder Kerr:

In these two resolutions we are presented with a fair specimen of the spirit, temper and disposition of the New England Abolitionists. Instead of making allowances for circumstances, and viewing the subject in an enlarged and liberal spirit, they, with one fell swoop, exclude forever from the kingdom of God all those who may in any way have connexion with slavery, whether that connexion resulted from choice, or from uncontrollable circumstances.²¹

The southerner then gave Biblical references to justify slavery, emphasizing that it had been legalized by the national government, and concluded:

The Borealis of the north cannot frighten and bewilder us. To the New England Convention we may say farewell, we have no desire to be united with you.²²

This statement evidently reflected the sentiments of the majority of the southern Christians and thereafter the Union of Correspondence soon ceased to exist. The outcome of the affair made the southerners acutely conscious of their religious isolation from the Connection outside the South, and they accordingly concluded that their greatest need was to organize their own conferences on firmer ground. The founding of the Southern Christian Association was the result.

A major part of the credit for such a progressive step toward the consummation of southern Christian solidarity must be given to the *Christian Sun* and its efficient editor. Kerr moved his school to Pittsboro in Chatham County, North Carolina, about 1848 and continued the publication of the paper from the new location. Unfortunately, he suffered a stroke in 1850, and a second stroke removed him from the

earthly scene before the end of the year. During his illness, the paper was prepared by the dedicated and untiring efforts of Mrs. Kerr and W. S. Gunter, one of the editor's students. The latter, recalling the dismal prospect for the future of the paper in those days, rejoiced that the periodical did survive the crisis and "thanks be to God, it still shines, and sheds its cheerful rays and brings joy and comfort to many hearts."²³ The publication had become a necessity to the Southern Christians, and in the few years of editorship Daniel W. Kerr won his campaign: he crystallized the aims of his readers into establishing the Southern Christian Association.

For the first time since 1794 the Christians in the South joined together in an effort to unite their church. The organizational meeting of the Association was scheduled for December 1846, but because of the illness of some of the conference representatives was postponed until May 7, 1847.²⁴ The North Carolina and Virginia Conference had appointed Daniel W. Kerr, J. R. Holt, Joseph Murray, and Jesse K. Cole to attend the meeting,²⁵ and Mills Barrett, William B. Wellons and Robert H. Holland had been delegated by the Eastern Virginia Conference.²⁶ Joseph B. Hinton, Henry B. Hayes, and Tapley Bowlin were chosen to represent the North Carolina Christian Conference.²⁷ Since the minutes are not available, there is no record of which delegates were present at the initial meeting in Granville County, North Carolina, at Good Hope Christian Church. Wellons was elected president and the new Association began its task of promoting missions, education, publication and other appropriate religious projects. The *Christian Palladium* praised the creation of the new organization "for the purpose of advancing more rapidly the principles we advocate by union of effort," and particularly "to superintend the publication of the 'Christian Sun,' a semi-monthly which has been conducted for three years by individual enterprise." The announcement also contained this plan:

They propose to raise funds by subscription from the friends of Christian liberty at the South, to purchase a press to furnish information through this paper, and other mediums of embodied thought to the community around them.

We trust this hitherto well-conducted instrument of moral and religious improvement will still continue to improve, and be made the source of light and heat to all within the orbit in which it may revolve.²⁸

Although the minor conferences played no official role in the formation of the Association, they were included in its efforts to draw the Christians into a closer fellowship, and the success of the new organization in this respect was one of its great accomplishments. The creation of this Association was the second most significant step on the road to the eventual consolidation of the southern Christian Church.

The *Christian Sun* became the official organ of the southern Christians when the Association was authorized to assume responsibility for its publication, and the Southern Christian Publishing Committee then ceased to exist. In its 1849 session in Raleigh, North Carolina, Mills Barrett was elected president and J. B. Hinton, secretary, of the Association.²⁹ Because of the untimely death of Daniel W. Kerr, a special meeting had to be called the next year at Kedar (Mt. Auburn) in Warren County, North Carolina, to face the problem of the future operation of the paper. When the meeting convened, Elder H. B. Hayes facilitated matters with a proposal:

Brethren, give me the Sun on my own pecuniary responsibility. I will take up the burden which Brother Kerr has laid down in death; and with your sympathy, prayers, and patronage I will promise that the Sun will rise again in the city of Raleigh.³⁰

After considerable deliberation, the offer was accepted, and Hayes moved the office of the paper to Raleigh. The format of the magazine had been changed by Kerr to four pages, twenty-one and a half by sixteen inches on a different grade of paper, and this was continued by the new publisher.

Fairly complete minutes have survived of the fourth meeting of the Association in November 1852 at Providence Chapel in Norfolk County, Virginia. Mills Barrett was appointed president; H. B. Hayes, secretary; and Alfred Apple, treasurer. J. B. Hinton, A. B. Freeman, Thomas J. Kilby, R. H. Holland, Alfred Isley, C. F. Faucett, and E. F. Watson were designated as an Executive Committee to serve for the next two years. Resolutions were adopted to pay Hayes \$500 per year after January 1, 1853, as Publishing Agent of the *Christian Sun*, and he was reappointed to serve with William B. Wellons and J. R. Holt as the editors for the next two years. The subscription rate was increased to \$1.50 per annum, and efforts were to be renewed to induce Conferences that had not already done so to affiliate with the Association.³¹

The fifth session of the Association was held on October 16, 1854, at O'Kelly Chapel, where Solomon Apple was elected president and H. B. Hayes secretary. In addition to the officers, the meeting was attended by W. B. Wellons, Edwin W. Beale and A. L. Hill from the Eastern Virginia Conference, and A. Iseley (Isley), G. G. Walker, J. I. Hobby, T. J. Fowler, H. B. Guthrie, and A. G. Anderson from the North Carolina and Virginia Conference. It was agreed that W. B. Wellons, A. Iseley and H. B. Hayes be appointed editors of the *Christian Sun* for the next two years, and that Hayes continue to print the paper. A. Moring, Thomas J. Kilby and G. G. Walker were elected to serve as an Executive Committee, and a resolution was passed requesting "our ministers and brethren of the Southern Chris-

tian Association to labor to extend the circulation of the *Christian Sun*, the organ of the same."³²

Other events made 1854 a significant year in the annals of the southern Christians. As a culmination of fraternal negotiations begun previously, the North Carolina Christian Conference merged with the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference, the name of the latter being retained for the new organization. This important event also took place at O'Kelly Chapel, and the meeting was attended by several members of the Eastern Virginia Conference.³³ In October of that year appropriate ceremonies were held at the Chapel to unveil a monument erected at the grave of O'Kelly. The list of participants in the program is a mute testimony to the growing spirit of toleration and friendship in the Christian Connection and for that reason is given in detail:

1. Memorial hymn written by Miss Rebecca F. Scott, of Ohio.
2. Prayer, by W. B. Wellons
3. Address by Rev. Isaac N. Walter, Springfield, Ohio
4. Remarks by Rev. T. J. Fowler
5. Prayer by Rev. A. Iseley
6. Benediction by Rev. H. B. Hayes³⁴

The marker was also fittingly inscribed:

Erected by his
Christian Friends
to the memory of
James O'Kelley of N. C.
"The Southern Champion
of Christian Freedom."³⁵

The valiant efforts of the editors of the *Christian Sun* were in a large measure responsible for the good will and spirit of cooperation engendered among the Christians, and they continued to use their talents unsparingly. In 1855 William B. Wellons was made editor-publisher of the paper, a position he was to hold for the next twenty-five years, and the offices of the paper were moved to Suffolk, Virginia. John R. Holt and Alfred Iseley (A. Isley) were corresponding editors, and T. J. Kilby, S. S. Barrett, and W. H. Boykin composed the Editorial Council. An Executive Committee had the overall supervision of the publication and its members were G. G. Walker, A. Moring, J. McCulloch, R. H. Holland, and A. L. Hill. The original heading on the front page had been replaced with the following caption:

Devoted to Religion, Morality, Temperance, Literature General and Local, News and the support of the principles of the Christian Church, South.³⁶

In 1858 a second line had been added which read:

Religion Without Bigotry, Zeal Without Fanaticism, Liberty
Without Licentiousness.³⁷

Final victory was won in 1856 by the champions of unity when the third highly significant step forward was taken by the organization of the Southern Christian Convention.³⁸ Shortly after it began to function, the new governing body offered to assume the responsibility for the *Christian Sun*. The Association agreed to accept the offer and at its final meeting in 1858 turned the control of the organ over to the Convention. Relieved of its major concern by the transfer, little remained for the Association to supervise. It had existed ten years and accomplished the task for which it was created. The *Christian Sun* was solvent, as the \$1,033 in liabilities was more than offset by the \$1,500 due from approximately 1,500 subscribers,³⁹ and its future seemed assured. Serving as the initial step in the union of a formerly divided group of conferences, the Southern Christian Association's record was an admirable milestone in the growth of the southern Christians. With success thus achieved, the organization disbanded in 1858 and honorably passed out of existence.

True to its announced purpose under editor Wellons, the *Christian Sun* carried news items, the official minutes of conferences and of the Convention, correspondence from readers and churchmen, obituaries, marriage notices, editorials and advertisements. The burning of Suffolk during the Civil War destroyed the printing plant, and publication was forced to cease until the regrettable conflict ended. When the paper was revived after the War, circulation increased with regularity and reached a peak of approximately 5,000 subscribers in the 1920's. The format of the periodical was changed from time to time, and the editorial offices were moved from place to place to suit the convenience of the various men who succeeded Wellons. The paper always had space for items other than the Church news, and these varied from time to time in accord with the interests of the day and the personalities of the editors. Wellons, catering to an almost entirely agrarian population, devoted several columns in each issue to horticulture and husbandry. Tradition has even given partial credit for the importance of peanuts in Nansemond County today to the agricultural writings of the editor. As urbanization increased with the arrival of the twentieth century, the emphasis turned to national and international events.

In 1894 the Centennial birthday of the Church was commemorated by a special eighteen by twenty-four inch issue of twelve pages, with the cover pages bright pink. The contents were an interesting summary of the activities of the Christian Church during its first century of existence.⁴⁰ In 1944 the caption "Centennial Issue" was printed

on the first page of the paper throughout the year in observance of the century-old age of the paper. After the printing of photographic material became possible, the periodical used illustrations freely to make its contents more interesting and appealing.

As the activities of the Church increased, additional departments and special reports were regularly included in the periodical's pages. These included the weekly "Suffolk Letter" and the "Elon Letter" contributed by W. W. Staley and W. A. Harper respectively. In addition to these, H. S. Hardcastle conducted the Sunday School Lessons; H. E. Rountree, a chaplain in the United States Navy, contributed "The Family Altar"; Mrs. Madge Moffitt Whitesell, the "Kiddies' Korner"; Charles D. Johnston, the "Christian Orphanage"; Miss Pattie L. Coghill, the Christian Endeavor Notes; and J. G. Truitt, "The Pulpit." J. O. Atkinson was the editor, assisted by W. W. Staley, W. A. Harper, Stanley C. Harrell, Roy C. Helfenstein and S. N. Lynam. P. J. Kernodle was managing editor.⁴¹

Although the editors strove to maintain an informative and inspiring church paper for the benefit of the Christian membership, the national depression was responsible for a serious decrease in circulation. In 1937 the number of subscribers had dropped to 1,080 and the paper was in financial difficulty. Although this number increased to 1,665 in 1940, the discouraged editor reported to the Southern Convention:

The paper now reaches fewer than one fifth of the homes. This means that eighty per cent of our church people do not see *The Christian Sun*. It appears from the records that the twenty per cent who do read it are the leaders of our churches. But the real problem is getting the people to read the paper. To do this may mean a radical change in the paper itself.⁴²

After this report the format was changed from time to time and in 1950 the number of subscribers had risen to 2,217, although the paper was operating with an annual deficit which the Southern Convention had to pay. A Special Committee composed of W. E. Wisseman, chairman; W. J. Andes, secretary; and T. Fred Wright, S. E. Madren, and W. Millard Stevens, members, had been appointed to study the situation. This Committee recommended to the 1950 Convention that a special drive be conducted to obtain 5,000 subscribers for the paper. The reasons for this action were expressed by this statement:

That we reaffirm our appreciation of the long and useful service of *The Christian Sun* among our church constituency; that we express our confidence in the indispensable service it can and will render in the coming years for the promotion of the enterprises of our church and for the welfare of our constituency; that we believe confidently in the ability and willingness of our church constituency to support *The Christian Sun* adequately.⁴³

The recommendation was approved and the drive conducted but its results were disappointing, as the number of subscribers did not greatly increase and financial difficulties continued to plague the publication. This was no reflection on the quality of the *Christian Sun* as a church paper, for its standards were always high. Publication is expensive, and very few religious periodicals exist without being subsidized by their sponsoring denominations. The increasing popularity of secular news media such as radio and television was responsible for a decrease in circulation of all periodicals including church publications. The paper was founded to be the mouthpiece of the southern Christians and to promote unity within the fellowship, and it served efficiently in this capacity; but after 1930 *The Congregationalist and Herald of Gospel Liberty* became the official organ of the denomination and the southern periodical was relegated to the position of a regional church paper. Eventually, the Church authorities concluded that the financial burden entailed made further support of the paper impractical and unnecessary. As a result of this decision, the final appearance of the *Christian Sun* was Number 50, Volume 117, issued on December 21, 1965. The cessation of the paper has aroused keen nostalgia among many southern Christians, who for many years considered it inseparable from the program of their Church. Its files are an historical treasure of the Christians and constitute a mute but impressive tribute to the heroic efforts of the men and women who labored through the years to build a church.

The following served as editors-in-chief of the *Christian Sun* during the one hundred and twenty years of its publication:

D. W. Kerr	1844-1850
H. B. Hayes	1850-1855
W. B. Wellons	1855-1875
J. T. Whitley	1875-1878
J. P. Barrett	1879-1880
W. T. Walker	1881-1882
J. P. Barrett	1882-1891
W. G. Clements	1891-1894
E. L. Moffitt	1894-1900
J. O. Atkinson	1900-1916
C. B. Riddle	1916-1922
J. P. Barrett	1922-1924
J. O. Atkinson	1924-1936
J. T. Kernodle	1936
F. C. Lester	1936-1940
R. L. House	1940-1953
J. T. Kernodle	1953-1954
S. C. Harrell	1954-1956
F. C. Lester	1956-1964
R. N. Rinker	1964-1965 ⁴⁴

Footnotes

- ¹ *Conferences*, 140
- ² *The Hillsborough Recorder*, Hillsborough, North Carolina, June 4, 1834. Hereinafter cited as *Recorder*.
- ³ *Recorder*, February 14, 1839.
- ⁴ *Conferences*, 147-148, 150.
- ⁵ *Sun*, June 18, 1851.
- ⁶ *Conferences*, 151-152.
- ⁷ *Palladium*, June 1, 1840; February 1, 1841; June 15, 1841. Also, Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 113-115.
- ⁸ *Sun*, January 1, 1844.
- ⁹ *The Christian Herald*, (ed. by Robert Foster, 17 volumes, 1818-1835, Portsmouth, New Hampshire), November 16, 1840; February 1, 1841; March 15, 1841; June 1, 1841; June 15, 1841; March 15, 1842. Also, Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 113-115.
- ¹⁰ *Christian Herald*, December 8, 1820.
- ¹¹ *Ibid*, September 1821.
- ¹² *Conferences*, 12.
- ¹³ *Ibid*, 69.
- ¹⁴ *Sun*, January 1, 1846.
- ¹⁵ *Conferences*, 163.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*, 72.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*, 150.
- ¹⁸ *Palladium*, June 13, 1841.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*, June 13, 1841.
- ²⁰ *Ibid*, June 13, 1844.
- ²¹ *Sun*, July 1844.
- ²² *Ibid*.
- ²³ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 117.
- ²⁴ *Ibid*, 255.
- ²⁵ *Conferences*, 163.
- ²⁶ *Ibid*, 77.
- ²⁷ *Sun*, November 1846.
- ²⁸ *Palladium*, July 31, 1847.
- ²⁹ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 127, 226, 256.
- ³⁰ *Sun*, May 21, 1851.
- ³¹ *Ibid*, November 24, 1854.
- ³² *Ibid*, October 25, 1854.
- ³³ *Conferences*, 193.
- ³⁴ *Sun*, October 25, 1854.
- ³⁵ *Ibid*.
- ³⁶ *Ibid*, May 11, 1855.
- ³⁷ *Ibid*, January 22, 1858.
- ³⁸ *Proceedings of the Southern Christian Convention, Held at Union Chapel, Alamance County, N. C.*, (Baltimore: Printed by Sherwood and Company, 1856), 1-24. Hereinafter cited as *Southern Convention 1856*.
- ³⁹ *Sun*, May 7, 1858, and May 14, 1858, contain the only extant official copy known of the Minutes of the Southern Christian Convention session of 1858.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid*, December 6, 1894.
- ⁴¹ *Annual 1928*, 50-51.
- ⁴² *Annual 1940*, 22.
- ⁴³ *Annual 1950*, 21-32.
- ⁴⁴ *Sun*, December 21, 1965.

Chapter V

The Southern Christian Convention

Despite its praiseworthy accomplishments, the limitations of the Southern Christian Association convinced the leadership of the southern Christians of their need for a stronger and larger central church organization, and the founding of the Southern Christian Convention in 1856 was the result. Articles and letters had frequently appeared in the *Christian Sun* advocating such a step and the institution would undoubtedly have been organized sooner or later had not matters been brought to a head in the founding year by a resurgence of an old problem: the slavery question.

The Christians in eastern Virginia had never abandoned hope for national unity, regardless of the existing barrier, and in 1842 delegated W. R. Stowe to represent their Conference "by letter in the General Convention to be held in the state of New York next October."¹ In 1850 W. B. Wellons represented the Eastern Virginia Conference at "a general book association and a general convention of the Christian connection" in Marion, New York.² The deliberations were harmonious until a committee report was introduced which strongly opposed slavery. Unable to defeat the proposal, the Virginia representative finally voted with the other delegates to accept it, although he claimed that the "liberty of conscience" principle of the southern Church upheld his right to disagree with it. There was still hope for peaceful co-existence between the slave-owning South and the free North in 1850, and when the Eastern Virginia Conference met that year it loyally vindicated the conduct of its messenger by resolving to "approve the course pursued by Elder W. B. Wellons in the general convention,"³ and made plans to raise \$40 to pay for his journey.

Regardless of the approbation of the Conference, the Providence Christian Church of Norfolk County, Virginia, passed and

published a number of resolutions condemning the action of the General Convention.⁴ In addition, Wellons' participation was strongly criticized, which brought forth a defense of his vote:

Before and after the adoption of the report on slavery by the Convention, we distinctly, and unequivocally stated, that we did not endorse the sentiments contained in the report; but were willing to accept it as a *compromise* and thereby reciprocate the kind of conciliatory feelings manifested by the committee.

The elder explained the situation further:

We found among our Northern friends two parties, the *Abolition* party, and the *Anti-Slavery* party. Every one acquainted at all with the members of our church North know, that there is a vast difference between the abolitionists, and the anti-slavery men. Scarcely a man can be found in the Northern States but what is opposed to slavery in the abstract. Yet we are glad to learn that the main body of our ministers in the free states have but little more sympathy with the Abolitionist, than we in the South have.⁵

This concise statement was accurately focused on the crux of the dis-sension: the Abolitionist movement. Slavery was not forbidden by the Constitution of the United States; therefore, it was a matter left to the individual states to decide. The free states outlawed the institution while the slave states retained it. The anti-slavery group, while opposed to the ownership of bondsmen, accepted the situation as it was and recognized the legal right of the slave states to legislate the matter as they chose and refrained from interfering with their decisions. On the other hand, the Abolitionists were determined to end slavery, regardless of its legality, and the campaign they waged to achieve their goal admitted no opportunity for compromise. It was their aggressive tactics which were so strongly resented by the southerners, clergy and laity alike. Many southerners had never owned a slave and some even opposed the practice. James Williamson, North Carolina-born Christian minister, was a prime example of one who coupled action with his convictions. Moving to Ohio in 1832, he carried his slaves with him and emancipated them upon his arrival, "realizing the benefit of causing the African's heart to sing with joy."⁶ David Purviance, another Tar Heel native, grew to manhood in Kentucky and won great praise during his service of several terms in the State Legislature, where he championed "gradual emancipation." Moving to Ohio in 1807, where his reputation as a courageous legislator had preceded him, Purviance was sent to the lower house of the general assembly in that state for one term, then served six years in the Ohio Senate where his reputation as an opponent of slavery was enhanced by his influence in repealing the state's "Black Laws."⁷ The Quakers actually assisted the blacks to escape from bondage through the famous Un-

derground Railroad. The Moravian religious principles forbade the ownership of slaves. Others opposed the system but upheld the right of the individual to make his own choice in the matter, and this coincided with the policy of the Christians to allow "liberty of conscience" in all matters. In some cases southerners who had no proprietary interest in slaves were goaded by the inflammatory attacks of the Abolitionists into an alliance with those who owned bondsmen in a patriotic defense of the right of their home state to decide the matter without dictation from those in another section.

An entirely new generation had grown up since James O'Kelly altruistically freed his slave, and its members accepted the situation into which they were born as a justifiable part of the southern economy and way of life. In 1854 W. B. Wellons wrote:

In Eastern Virginia every Christian Minister save two, are slaveholders, and the two who are non-slaveholders are we believe, not so from choice, but from necessity. It is about the same in proportion to numbers we think, in North Carolina, and all the Southern States. The larger portion of our membership are either directly or indirectly connected and interested in slavery.⁸

For a decade prior to the publication of this statement by Wellons, the columns of the *Christian Palladium* had contained numerous communications on the subject of abolition, and Stephen S. Barrett had composed several of them. "It does not belong to me to prove slavery good," he wrote, "only to show that others fail of proving it SIN."⁹ In 1847 one hundred and forty-nine northern ministers published a protest in which they asserted, "It [slavery] is sealed within and without with iniquity, and is in direct opposition to the Gospel of Christ."¹⁰ As the debate became more heated while one retort followed another, abolitionist sentiment increased in the northern Christian Church. Dissension at the Marion Convention in 1850 followed and the climax was reached four years later in the disruption of the Christian Connection.

The Eastern Virginia Conference, still optimistic over the possibility of a peaceful union despite the rising opposition to slavery, dispatched its champion, W. B. Wellons, to the General Christian Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, in October 1854. This time the delegate was placed on a committee with A. L. McKinney and Philetus Roberts to recommend a policy for the slavery issue. Wellons was unable to prevent the drafting of a report which emphatically condemned slavery but his influence was sufficient to have it include the following section:

Resolved,—That in our attempts to remove the evils of slavery, and to prevent its further extension, we should avoid harsh, unkind, and denunciatory language, and that while we faithfully admonish

our brethren of the South to wash their hands from this evil, we should remember that no part of the Union is free from wrong, and we should also remember that the North has an interest in common with the South, in the extension of liberal Christianity. —This consideration with others that might be mentioned, should prompt us to extend the hand of Christian charity and kindness to our good friends of the South, whose birth and education have placed them in that portion of our country where slavery is entailed by inheritance.¹¹

Wellons was also able to obtain the consent of his fellow committeemen to his preparation of minority report in which he stated:

They [the southerners] have looked upon it [slavery] as a relation which has injured the white man more than the colored man, and have regretted the introduction of the system among them. But under existing circumstances they have no conscientious scruples upon the subject and feel that they are in the pathway of duty to hold their servants and follow the directions given by the Apostles of Christ to masters concerning their servants. They believe that the colored people are in a far better condition in slavery, than to be set free and remain among the whites; all experience having proved that the white and colored races cannot exist together in a state of perfect equality. The Southern Christians are honest and sincere in their sentiments.¹²

Both reports were accepted by the Convention and if both had been discussed and defended in a dignified manner all might have ended peacefully even though the majority report should be the one adopted by the Convention. Instead, a furious debate broke out which soon changed into a series of harsh and vindictive denunciations of slavery. William B. Wellons was far too intelligent to have carried to Cincinnati the conviction that he could sway the Convention into approving slavery, but he did hope he could convince the body that a peaceful co-existence was possible between slave-owning and anti-slavery Christians. He had been successful in attaining his goal with the committee of which he was a member and he hoped to win his point with the Convention when he presented his case to the entire assembly. However, that chance never came, for debate on the majority report rapidly changed into a series of furious tirades against slavery in which caution and dignity were thrown to the winds. Refusal to associate further with "the man of blood" was only one of the harsh and ill-chosen remarks that were made. A delegate named Dearing introduced an amendment couched in the most acrimonious terms which virtually nullified the passage of friendliness towards the southerners which was incorporated in the majority report. It was speedily passed by the Convention, after which another delegate named Weston offered the following amendment:

Resolved,—That the requirements of the law, known as the Fugitive Slave Law, are in direct opposition to the word of God, which says, "Thou shalt not deliver unto the master the servant which has escaped from his master unto thee;" that it is contrary to the spirit of the gospel, and should be considered null and void.

Resolved,—That the passage of the Kansas and Nebraska bill, and the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, is a flagrant violation of the national faith—a gross national immorality, an act for the extension of oppression, as reprehensible as the most ambitious and unprovoked of the conquests of Alexander and Napoleon; and that all the moral force of the country; individual and associated, should be united for its condemnation.

Resolved,—That we recommend our people to memorialize Congress for the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Bill, and so much of the Kansas and Nebraska bill as permits the establishment of Slavery in those Territories.¹³

This fiery proposal was adopted by a vote of 350 to 231 and the efforts of the Committee on Slavery to preserve peace were completely undone. The president then called for the next item on the agenda without ever giving Wellons an opportunity to speak in behalf of his minority report. When this was done, the Virginian realized that his labor had been in vain and his hopes thwarted. Denied the democratic privilege of speech in the meeting, then violently rebuffed by the denunciations of those to whom it was granted, Wellons felt that he had traveled the proverbial last mile in his efforts to promote union and at the same time keep faith with southern convictions. He then informed the assembly that he interpreted the passage of the amendments to mean a virtual expulsion of himself and his "Southern brethren" from the Convention and in consequence he would "bid them a final adieu."¹⁴ Then, taking up his hat and walking cane, Wellons made a dignified exit from the room, followed by several delegates including Elder Hand, Elder Simonton of Ohio, and Elder Isaac N. Walter, who resigned the vice-presidency before his departure.

When the excitement of the heated session had subsided somewhat, the action taken appeared to many delegates as precipitate and unwise. Accordingly, an agreement was reached to reconsider the issues on the following day. In consequence of this decision Walter and some of the disgruntled representatives returned to the Convention where the offensive amendments were rescinded by the adoption of the majority report of the Committee on Slavery in its original form. The remaining items on the organization's agenda were then considered but without W. B. Wellons, who was on his way home. Had he remained in Cincinnati until the Convention revised its actions, the situation would not have changed, for the rejected Virginian was

thoroughly convinced that no enduring harmony could prevail at that time between the Christians of the North and South. His Conference was in agreement with his report and voted that the Convention action "must receive our condemnation."¹⁵ Decades passed and a bloody war was fought before another southern delegate was sent to a national Christian convention.

All hope for an organic union between Christians of the North and South was blasted by the unhappy events at Cincinnati, and the Christian Connection was split, as practically all other religious bodies already had been, over the issue of slave ownership. Although the national political division did not begin until 1860, the evangelical churches were among the earliest organizations to suffer from the institution of slavery. Both in the Federal Union and in the various states, the legality of owning bondsmen was regarded by the governments as a political matter, closely related to states' rights and the efforts of both North and South to maintain equal voting power from each section in the United States Congress. However, to the churches of the nation slavery was a moral issue in addition to being a political and economic problem. Christian piety had been the primary basis for the rejuvenation of religion in the South and West as a result of the Great Revival of 1800, and the southern churchmen decided it was less impious to keep the ignorant and illiterate blacks in bondage than to release them into the world without the knowledge and ability to fend for themselves. On the other hand, the northern churchmen could not reconcile the ownership of human beings as chattels with the principles of pious Christians. The result was an ideological impasse which caused the southerners to withdraw from the national religious organizations and form separate churches of their own in the South. This division occurred among the Baptists as early as 1845, among the Methodists in 1844, and had begun among the Presbyterians by 1847. Had the Christians in the United States been a truly national church rather than simply a connection, they might have divided as early as did the other churches rather than being one of the last groups to do so.¹⁶

Sentiment for forming a Christian Convention in and for the South was immediately accelerated by the outcome of the Cincinnati meeting. W. B. Wellons was emphatically convinced that the southern Christians would have to plot their own course and design an effective governmental system under which they could function. Jacob Calahan voiced the general opinion of the Christian in the South when he wrote from Georgia, "Some plan for future operation should be agreed upon, . . . as we have been rejected by the Northern Convention."¹⁷ Numerous similar declarations drowned the objections of the skeptics, and the Conferences were spurred into decisive action.

In September 1856 the long debated Southern Christian Convention became a reality.

The organizational meeting of the Convention was held at Union Chapel, Alamance (formerly Orange) County, North Carolina, from September 30 through October 4, 1856. Thomas J. Kilby of Suffolk, Virginia, and Professor Albert Gallatin Anderson of Caswell County, North Carolina, served as president and secretary *pro tem* respectively. The slate of permanent officers elected were Elder W. B. Wellons, president; Thomas J. Kilby, first vice-president; C. F. Faucette, second vice-president; and E. F. Watson, Elder B. N. Hopkins and Andrew L. Hicks, secretaries. Only the North Carolina and Virginia Conference and the Eastern Virginia Conference were represented by delegates at the meeting. Almost the first item of business to come before the Convention was a declaration presented by Stephen S. Barrett, son of Elder Mills Barrett, which gave as one of the reasons for uniting in a convention "the course pursued by our Northern brethren . . . denouncing us as sinners, and in using the bitterest language to express their hatred towards us, . . . and that they have departed from the teachings of the Bible, . . . which neither makes the ownership of slave property a test of fellowship, religious character or church membership. . . ." The statement concluded:

On general religious principles we may be united, but in all the general enterprises of the denomination we will act separate and apart. We make this declaration with sincere sorrow and pity towards those who have thus wandered from the path marked out by divine revelation, and will pray that the scales of fanaticism may yet fall from their eyes, and that they may return to the path from which they have wandered.¹⁸

Some of the delegates resented paying any attention at all to the Abolitionists and re-opening the slavery controversy, but the proposal was adopted without change. While the approval of this declaration by a group of Christian churchmen is difficult to understand in the light of the twentieth century, it must be remembered that the delegates were typical of their day and age, and it shows quite clearly the seriousness of the quarrel over the right to own slaves.

The next major item on the agenda was the proposed fundamental principles for the Christian Church. After considerable discussion, the following were adopted:

1. Christ the only Head of the church.
2. The name Christian to the exclusion of all party or sectarian names.
3. The Holy Bible or the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments our only creed or confession of faith.
4. Christian character or vital piety the true scriptural test of fellowship or church membership.

5. The right of private judgment and the liberty of conscience the privilege and duty of all.¹⁹

Following this action, a detailed plan was agreed upon for the organization of individual churches. In addition to subscribing to the five Fundamental Principles, each church was supposed to have a pastor assisted by two deacons for its spiritual leadership. A treasurer, secretary and sexton were also to be appointed by each congregation for the usual duties customary for those offices. At least four sacramental meetings were to be held annually, and in addition each church was duty bound to unite with the annual conference in its area.²⁰

Rules were agreed upon for the organization and activities of conferences which were very much the same as those already in practice, and then the duties of the Convention officials, which were to include a treasurer, were specified in detail. Authority was given the Convention to serve as a final court of appeals to settle disputes not otherwise resolved among churches, and in addition:

The Convention shall take under its supervision, all the general enterprises of the denomination, South; shall devise plans for institutions of learning, for the publication of a Southern periodical, and the establishment of a Southern Book Concern, and a General Missionary Society.²¹

After other minor items were disposed of, an agreement was reached that the next session would be held in 1858 and every four years afterwards. The hope was expressed that the organization would soon embrace other conferences in addition to the two founding bodies. The delegates then sang "Blest be the tie that binds," and the first meeting of the Southern Christian Convention adjourned.²²

With the formation of a central organization in 1856 the participating Conferences ceased to be merely a part of the Christian Connection in the United States and became the Christian Church in the South. There were still many aspects of a denomination that were lacking, for the power to license, ordain and station ministers, in addition to the "right of choice" in many other governmental matters, still rested in the various conferences. The Convention was merely supervisory, and its principal function was the sponsorship of several worthy church enterprises in the field of education, publication and missions. Although there was a general feeling of exultation over the potentialities of the Convention, its structural weaknesses gradually became apparent.

Ten years later Solomon Apple, who had been a delegate at Union Chapel, summarized the result of the meeting in an address before the North Carolina and Virginia Conference:

They adopted a manifesto, setting forth one reason for separation from the North, but the great principle which underlay the surface

was entirely ignored. And so far as they said anything to the contrary, the world might have supposed they believed in Unitarianism, Campbellism, Universalism, and other "ism," but Abolitionism. Two or three brief reports were made upon the subject of church government. They put forth no religious directory, form of judicatory, or ceremonies for the celebration of matrimony, funeral rites, ordination of Elders and Deacons, or for the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper . . . Nor do I say this in order to hold that body up to ridicule; far from it. For their action, meagre and incomplete as it was, was yet better than no action at all. As such it is entitled to respect. But to claim for it anything like perfection would be the acme of folly. It was only one among the many steps which had to be taken in the onward career of improvement.²³

Apple's critique, although delivered in retrospect, clearly outlined the need for the establishment of a more definite policy in many respects before the southern Christian Church would be effectively organized. Resolving these matters would constitute major problems, and these began to intrude upon the peace of the new Convention shortly after its creation.

Thomas Bashaw, the young and eager pastor of the Christian Church at New Bern, North Carolina, sent a series of articles to the *Christian Sun* in 1858, describing in detail improvements in church polity and practice which he believed to be imperative. He advocated (1) a strict adherence by all conferences to the plan outlined by the Convention and (2) supervised uniform regulations for all clergymen. These proposals aroused only a minimum of criticism, but Bashaw drew fiery opposition when he suggested:

And see also, if something is not lacking, to secure us as a denomination, from that misrepresentation, which has been hurled from time to time against the Christians, and will continue to be hurled against them, until they take steps to put a stop to it, by presenting themselves in their true light, or true position before other denominations and the world at large, in reference to the faith and doctrines believed and held by them as a denomination. This the Christian church has never yet done, and this is one of the main things lacking now.²⁴

In general practice, the worship services of the Christian Church were similar in form to those used by other Protestants, with the exception of those who favored a liturgy. Frequent revival or "protracted" meetings and even occasional camp meetings were held, as was done by the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians. The problem which hampered the new generation of clergymen to which Bashaw belonged was the matter of identity. There were three distinct groups in the United States known as the Christians. Each had evolved without prior knowledge of the other, in different parts of the nation, and with no formal connection with each other. Each dif-

ferred somewhat from the other, but all three had been maligned and accused of heterodox beliefs by other sects and denominations. The five principles adopted by the southern Christians at Union Chapel might have been sufficient for James O'Kelly, whose pendulum-like swing from episcopacy had carried him to the opposite extreme of allowing individuals equal right of choice and interpretation, but they were insufficient for some of his successors. The Unitarians had become closely associated with the Christians in New England. Universalism had become a doctrinal issue, and the various credal points adopted by other denominations were puzzling to the laity and oftentimes to the clergy. Bashaw earnestly desired clarification of the matter, and to implement it sent a proposal containing twenty-eight Articles to the *Sun* to be published before the next Convention assembled.

Editor Wellons had obligingly published the communications from the zealous Carolinian, but he explained that the Articles would have to be omitted because they would require more than a page in the journal. In all fairness, he promised to present the proposal to the next Convention, although "to adopt articles of faith as a denominational standard would be to adopt a creed,"²⁵ and Wellons opposed such action. Replying to this statement, Bashaw retorted:

I have, and do still maintain that a declaration of Christian faith touching the principle [sic] doctrines of the Bible, is no human creed, no more a human creed, than the Bible itself, if that declaration is in accordance with, and sustainable by the plain teachings of the Holy Scriptures.²⁶

Other correspondents joined in the increasingly heated controversy which was finally checked by the Editor's ironic statement, "We advise all parties to be calm and act prudently, the storm will soon pass over and all will then be quiet again."²⁷

The first regular session of the Southern Christian Convention met from May 5 through 8, 1858, at Cypress Chapel, Nansemond County, Virginia. E. F. Watson, a medical doctor, was elected president, the first and only layman to hold the office before 1956. The other officials were A. L. Hill, secretary, and Thomas J. Kilby, treasurer. Not only were representatives present from the two founding Conferences, but Jubilee Smith represented the Georgia Conference, P. McCullough attended from Western Virginia, and a fraternal letter was sent by the Missouri Conference. Zachariah Hollo-way, from the Disciples in Alabama, was extended the courtesy of a seat in the assembly.²⁸ Bashaw attended as a delegate and, though aware that his proposal was "of a touchy character; and in all probability would create no little excitement," he courageously introduced the following:

Resolved, That this Convention take into consideration the expediency or inexpediency of defining our position as a denomination upon the leading doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, which we claim as the foundation and creed of our church.²⁹

Insisting that this action would be a defense against slander and misrepresentation, he defended his motion:

But we as a denomination ought to define what we are, and show to the world what are our fundamental doctrines.

....

May I ask, what is the cause that the Church has not advanced? Why have we not a church in every village? The cause is we have not declared what we believe and have therefore suffered much slander.³⁰

W. B. Wellons took the lead in opposing the proposal on the grounds that the Christian principles agreed upon by the 1856 Convention were sufficient for all purposes. "The Christians are as much united as any other Protestant church in the world," he asserted, and a further declaration of faith would be an "abridgement" and "mutilation" of the word of God.³¹ The Convention rallied to Wellons' support and defeated the proposal. Shortly afterwards Bashaw quietly dropped out of the Christian Church.

The youthful Bashaw simply broke his lance against the determination of the antebellum Christian leadership to resist any elaboration of the principle that the Bible was their only creed; the reasons he presented for clarifying the position of the southern Christians, however, were based on sensible conclusions. Testimony that his apprehensions were not unfounded was the occasion, within two years, when W. B. Wellons himself felt called upon to publish in book form an indignant denial of charges made by the Reverend John Paris that the Christians in the South had forsaken O'Kelly's principles and embraced Unitarianism.³² Similar situations continued to disturb the Church from time to time until the decision rendered in 1858 was completely reversed a decade later; paradoxically, it was Editor Wellons who championed the change at that time. The chastening effects of four years of war and the rise of new leadership would also be prominent factors in effecting a change of thought in the Conferences. One result of the refusal to countenance new ideas was the loss to the Church of the enterprising and intelligent Bashaw.

During the Cypress meeting, plans were advanced for establishing a Southern Book Concern, organizing a Home Missionary Society, supporting Graham Institute and furnishing financial aid to retired ministers. The animated discussion of the Bashaw motion was the principal jarring note in the deliberations which otherwise promised a wider scope of Church activities for the future. The support from

additional Conferences also strengthened the Convention and increased the possibilities for future development.

In 1860 the prospects of the southern Christians, which had been brightening for the past two years, were suddenly dimmed by that eruption of internecine strife which might be fittingly termed the War for Southern Independence, but is usually referred to as the Civil War. The Convention was unable to hold another session until 1866, and the North Carolina and Virginia Conference alone managed to hold its annual meetings during the dark years of the conflict. Churches were disorganized, the lives of many Christians sacrificed on the battlefield, finances were depleted, the *Christian Sun* was forced to discontinue publication, and the affairs of the Christians were chaotic as were those of their fellow southerners.

An official statement passed by the North Carolina and Virginia Conference at Hank's Chapel, Chatham County, North Carolina, in 1861, clearly defined the attitude of that body toward the Confederate States of America. The participation of the Christians, as individuals, in the civil and military life of the new government supports the conclusion that the resolution expressed the sentiments of the southern Christian Church in general. The resolution read:

1. That the Southern Confederacy is not at all responsible for the War now raging.
- 2.. That we well understand the motive which has induced a mere section of the government to assume to constitute that government still, and to attempt to coerce the other section into an involuntary connection with it; and that the one ruling idea of abolition, unjust and unholy as it is, has urged them to this audacious, mad and fratricidal policy, and that they alone are responsible for the war with all its calamities and horrors.
3. That without claiming any further right that belongs to every individual in every community peaceably and publicly to express opinions upon all matters of any public importance, we would meekly, though decidedly, give expression of our sympathies with and for the Southern Confederacy, in her struggle for independence.
4. That the cause of our injured country shall be made a subject of prayer; also, our public officers, both Civil and Military; and our noble Army should be made subjects of prayer, by all our ministers and members, in the true spirit of prayer, until our oppressors ashamed of their iniquitous work shall abandon it, peace be again restored, and our independence secured.
5. That we have many reasons which give us confidence to believe that a gracious Providence is smiling upon us, hence we will still look to Him for help. We will be careful that in-

flation and pride shall not follow the issue, that the glory of God and the good of men shall be the result.³³

No statistics exist designating which Confederate civil servants, official or unofficial chaplains, hospital attendants, or soldiers in the ranks were members of the Christian Church,³⁴ but in view of the attitude expressed by the Conference it is only reasonable to conclude that the Christians were equally as patriotic as the other religious denominations during the tragic conflict. Like all other southern institutions, the Christian Church had her ranks decimated and crippled by the killing and wounding during four years of war, and likewise suffered her part of the general devastation of property and possessions that overspread the South. The Christians were Confederates; they paid in full the same price for their loyalty that was exacted from their countrymen. They were defeated but not destroyed and the future had to be faced, no matter how difficult the situation might be. Again the North Carolina and Virginia Conference, meeting in 1865 at Oak Level Church in Franklin County, North Carolina, voiced the conclusions applicable to all Christians. Far more humble in spirit than four years previously, the Conference recognized the inevitable and agreed:

That we truly mourn the sad calamity which came upon our beloved country in the late struggle, in the loss of life, the destruction of property, and the widespread ruin and desolation, which is seen and felt throughout the land. Yet in all this we deem it our duty as Christians to bow submissively to the will of God, and believe that He doeth all things well. And now that we have peace restored to our distracted country, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we as an Ecclesiastical body, pledge a faithful obedience to, and cordial compliance with, the Federal Government, and that we will strive to promote peace and harmony in our beloved country.³⁵

In this spirit the Christians faced the formidable task of general construction and began the struggle to rebuild their Church.

From the wreckage of the Christian Church in the postwar South, the indomitable William B. Wellons emerged to continue his role as a courageous leader of his people. In 1862, when the Confederate military forces abandoned the Suffolk area, he moved to Petersburg in order to continue the publication of the *Christian Sun*, an effort which proved fruitless. Forced to suspend the periodical, Wellons then edited the *Army and Navy Messenger* for a short while, after which he served the Confederate Army as a chaplain for the remainder of the War. When hostilities ceased, he returned with his family to Suffolk to find his once comfortable home a filthy shambles, so stripped of its furnishings that it was without even "a chair, stool or block to sit upon." Amid the general chaos, with the future uncer-

tain and foreboding, "Good men turned pale, and looked one towards another for advice, which none felt competent to give." Wellons found his courage weakened by the circumstances and later described his temptations:

I looked first towards poor, distressed Mexico; then hastily read the geography and history of Brazil; then thought of burying myself in New York or some one of the larger Northern cities. But I at last determined to take all the conflicting feelings and thoughts and bind them in one confused bundle and lay them down at the feet of Jesus. I earnestly besought the Father of Spirits to give direction. My mind became settled, my purpose became fixed. I resolved to come home and at once set to work to gather up the scattered fragments and preach Christ in adversity as I had preached Him in prosperity—to the inhabitants of the valley as I had to those upon the mountain top.³⁷

With this decision made, as soon as the preacher could make the necessary provisions to care for his family he began to correspond with his denominational colleagues in order to salvage the organization of their Church. Interest was slowly revived and sufficient cooperation enlisted for the Southern Christian Convention to hold its second regular session in May, 1866, at Mount Auburn in Warren County, North Carolina.

Only a few of the delegates from North Carolina and Virginia were able to attend the meeting, and none were present from the Georgia, Tennessee or Missouri Conferences. The situation was discouraging, but the determined Christians proceeded with the agenda and were cheered by a request from the Central Virginia Christian Conference for admission to the Convention. The principal accomplishments of the session were two in number and were a testimony to the chastening effects of the War upon the former attitude of the churchmen. Both propositions were introduced by John Newton Manning, a recent graduate of the college now known as Washington and Lee University, and the first resolved:

Whereas, The principles of the Christian Church are imperfectly known to the world at large, and can only be said to exist in a verbal form: and

Whereas, The Government of the Church is incomplete, being a mere general outline, not entering into many particulars which are essential to a thorough form of organization—therefore,

Resolved, That this Convention will enter into the consideration of such measures as will tend to promote these ends, by reducing the general distinguishing features of the Christian Church to a written form, embodying a declaration of its principles, form of ecclesiastical government, and mode of worship, with the usual forms by which the ordinances of the Church are celebrated.³⁸

Although there was a lengthy discussion, so great was the change of attitude among the Christians since 1858 that adoption of these proposals was easily accomplished. Then Manning presented a paper he had prepared with the assistance of several ministerial colleagues outlining the "Principles of Government of the Christian Church, together with a Directory for Religious Worship."³⁹ James W. Wellons, brother of the editor, was defeated in an effort to refer the matter to a committee,⁴⁰ and after deliberation the plan was accepted. Although the principles adopted by the Convention contained fewer statements concerning creed than Bashaw had advocated eight years earlier, the agreement to make one at all signified a change in the attitude of the Christians. The stabilizing effects of this clarification of doctrine and practices heralded a new period of growth for the Christian Church.

Manning remained in the Convention spotlight, as he next introduced a plan for the revival of the *Christian Sun* and the *Southern Book Concern* by collecting from "all members and friends of the Christian Church" ten cents annually to supplement the meager funds available from the treasury. This motion was speedily passed and Manning was named to serve with William B. Wellons and W. H. Read as a committee to begin republication of the Church journal. Plans were then made for an "extraordinary" session of the Convention the following year at which, hopefully, a larger attendance would be possible and the significant decisions made at Mount Auburn could be further approved and put into practice.⁴¹

One of the provisions in the newly adopted "Principles and Government" was a change of name for the Convention, so it was the General Convention of the Christian Church which returned to Mount Auburn in May of 1867 for its special session. Again delegates were all from either the Eastern Virginia or the North Carolina and Virginia Conferences, but the total attendance was almost double that of the previous meeting. Approval was given to the adoption of the "Principles" the year before, although Manning, representing the Board of Publication, reported the plan had not been printed because no funds had been raised for that purpose. He further informed the delegates that the Board had accepted the offer of W. B. Wellons to revive the *Christian Sun* on his own responsibility until such time as the Convention could reimburse him for his outlay and resume ownership of the journal. Because of this arrangement, publication of the periodical had been resumed in February, 1867, and continued weekly since that date. Manning also reported the great need for a hymnal to be published as soon as it could be financed.⁴²

The Committee on Finance estimated the Church membership in the two major Conferences in North Carolina and Virginia to be in ex-

cess of 6,000. Using \$500 as the average per capita worth, a sum of more than \$3 million was calculated to be the total wealth of the communicants. However, though \$70,000 was needed for the expansion of Convention enterprises, "the amount of money in circulation in the Southern States not being equal to commercial purposes,"⁴³ the maximum sum that seemed possible to raise was \$1,000 per annum. No plans, regardless of their expediency, could be activated until at least a part of the needed finances was collected. The Convention agreed upon boundary lines to separate the Conferences in Virginia and North Carolina and then adjourned.

Financial aid was soon forthcoming, for before the end of the year *The Principles and Government of the Christian Church: Also, A Directory for the Worship of God* was printed and circulated. The pamphlet soon became known as the *Christian Manual*, a name which it has retained ever since the first publication.⁴⁴ The Christian Church was defined in the pamphlet as any or all of "those on the earth who constitute the body, of which Christ is the Head," although "at present it embraces only a part of those in many sections of the country who desire the reformation of the wicked, the spiritual worship of God, and the union of the great brotherhood of Christ."⁴⁵ Biblical references for all statements made were included in the declaration. The five principles accepted by the Christians in 1854 were included, supplemented by briefly explained concepts of God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The age-old question of baptism was finally resolved by the sentence, "Respecting the mode, or the subject of baptism, every one should be fully persuaded in his own mind."⁴⁶ The greater part of the booklet was devoted to government and contained the proper plans for organizing a church, a conference, and the Convention, which "is composed of representatives from all the Christian Conferences in the Southern States, and shall bear the title of the General Convention of the Christian Church."⁴⁷ A directory of worship was included, specifying approved procedures for worship, administering the sacraments, marriages, and funerals. Compiled under the editorship of the brilliant, well-educated Manning, the handbook was neither lengthy nor verbose, but a concise, specific treatise for the guidance of the Christian Church. Not one fundamental principle nor authorized custom of the Christians was changed, but all were simply explained, accompanied by terse and explicit directions for their use. With the agreement to publish and abide by this invaluable guide, the Christian Church in the South passed out of its adolescence and, more closely united in spirit and in organization than it had been since its founding, faced maturity.

No official data have been found on the numerical strength of the membership of the Christian Church prior to 1858, when the

North Carolina and Virginia Conference began including a statistical table in its minutes. In that year 2,460 communicants were reported in 49 churches. In 1866 the membership had increased to 4,259, although the number of churches had decreased to 27.⁴⁸ The General Convention of 1870, which met at Suffolk, Virginia, expanded its records to include statistics and listed 21 churches in Virginia with a total membership of 2,866. This figure added to the 2,751 members listed for 38 churches in North Carolina made a total of 5,617 members of 59 Christian churches in the two states. This total reflected a loss in membership sustained the previous year when a majority of the Virginia Valley membership had seceded from the Conference and joined with the northern Christians. However, the Deep River Valley Conference was not included in these statistics because of lack of information, and several churches without pastors were not listed. The Minutes also included a Ministerial Directory with 47 names and addresses, although it was admittedly incomplete.⁴⁹ The membership in Virginia and North Carolina had been estimated at over 6,000 by the 1867 Convention, which is an approximate agreement with the above figures; however, no exact total of the number of Christian churches and their memberships in the South was known as late as 1870. Imperfect though these figures may be, it is obvious that the Christian memberships had increased slowly from the estimated 1,000 who associated with James O'Kelly in 1794.

Financially, the Church was poor. As chairman of the Board of Finance, John N. Manning made his biennial report in 1870 as follows:

Receipts from all sources	\$594.73
Loan to the Board of Publication	361.54
Expenses in printing, etc.	13.29
	374.83
Leaving a balance in the hand of the Treasurer of	\$219.90 ⁵⁰

The chairman was of the opinion that a larger sum would have been raised had more diligence been exerted to collect it, but under the circumstances he was thankful for the sum that was contributed. The impoverished conditions suffered in the postwar South impeded the projects of the Christians just as they did those of all religious institutions.

Financial straits were also a hindrance in other ways. The Valley (formerly Central) Virginia Conference was the only member body which sent a representative to join the delegates of the two major Conferences at the 1870 Convention. The Deep River Valley, Georgia and Alabama, Tennessee and Missouri Conferences were not represented. This did not necessarily result from waning interest but was due to the fact that the churchmen could not afford the time nor the money required for the long journey to either Virginia or North Caro-

lina, where the Conventions held their sessions. It was sufficiently difficult for those who lived closer to attend the meetings and there was barely a quorum present in 1870, although two New England ministers were able to be present and were welcomed as fraternal delegates.⁵¹

The Committee on Home Missions echoed the financial plight of the Church when it reported there had never been a greater need for evangelistic effort but that the labors and accomplishments of the ministry were "greatly impaired for want of means to sustain them in their work."⁵² The Committee on Schools and Colleges reported a growing need for educational institutions but was unable to present a concrete plan for providing them. The Board of Publication had been unable to publish the hymnbook desired, but the resourceful William B. Wellons had again come to its rescue, assuming the responsibility for the project, and the hymnal had been completed and circulated.⁵³

Wellons, as president of the Convention, then made an inspiring address to the assembly, which was followed by adjournment. The Editor subsequently printed the Convention Minutes for 1866 and 1867, for which no funds had previously been available, and combined them with the 1870 record in one pamphlet. He then guaranteed the financial success of the publication by selling 22 pages of commercial advertisements which he attached to the booklet; he offered the finished product for sale at 12c per copy! In addition to the Minutes and the hymnal, the enterprising editor also offered for sale Freese's *Travel in Palestine*, Wellons' *Christians Not Unitarians*, S. Apple's *True Position of the Christian Church*, and Manning's *Conference Address*. Orders were also taken at the *Sun* office for the publications of the American Sunday School Union, the American Tract Society, Sabbath School literature, *Godey's Lady's Book*, *Arthur's Home Magazine*, *The Lady's Friend*, *The Children's Hour*, "and all the monthlies North and South."⁵⁴ When publication of *The Christian Annual* began, the example set by the New England Christians was followed, and an almanac included with the minutes of the Convention and conferences. As most families of that day purchased an almanac each year, the inclusion of this feature increased circulation which absorbed publication costs. Thus, the practical application of his versatile talents accounts in large measure for the efficiency of Editor Wellons in keeping the publication efforts of the Christian Church solvent.

The 1874 Convention assembled at Providence Church in Graham, North Carolina, where it was opened with an eloquent address by President Wellons emphasizing the desirability of broadening Christian denominational unity. In keeping with this theme, and inspired by reports from the meeting of the World's Evangelical Al-

liance in New York the previous year, a committee composed of John N. Manning, John M. Moring and Jesse T. Whitley drafted a Circular Address containing a Manifesto stating the grounds upon which the southern Christians could unite with other denominations. Whitley, who presented the report for the Committee, had been assisted financially by the Church to attend Richmond College; and he was still in school when he became a licentiate in 1871. In addition to his pastorates at Antioch and Spring Hill, he was the editor of *The Little Christian*, a periodical begun that year for the youth of the Church.⁵⁵ Able to stand on his own feet intellectually, and sponsored by the influential Wellons, Whitley's prestige rapidly increased as a leader of the Church, and he was an excellent spokesman for the Committee. The Address was adopted by the Convention, with only William S. Long, Solomon Apple and Peter R. Harden voting against it. The policy of the Christians toward interdenominational unity had never been expressed so completely prior to the Manifesto, and it served as an official guide for many years after its passage. For that reason the complete text of the statement is included here:

MANIFESTO

The General Convention of the Christian Church, assembled in quadrennial session this 6th day of May, 1874, hereby declares:

I. It is the steadfast belief of this body that Christ established but *one* Church, designing that all his followers, as members of that one body, should harmoniously work together for the salvation of the world. We are of the opinion that the present division of the Church into sects, and the attitude of these sects toward each other, are offensive to God, detract from the glory of the Saviour, and impede the reformation of the world.

II. It is our belief that entire unanimity of opinion upon matters of theological doctrine and ecclesiastical polity, is unattainable, so long as "we see through a glass darkly;" but that a unity of love, forbearance and co-operation is fully within the reach of all true christians.

III. We hail with joy the widespread and increasing desire among God's people to come into a closer relationship with one another, manifested in such meetings as those of the Evangelical Alliance, and represented by many periodicals of the day. It pleases us to know that Churches are springing into existence in various localities, composed of christians who are tired of sectarian intolerance; and desire to manifest their essential unity; and that "doubtful disputations" are sinking into disuse, while the great points of faith, common to all christians, are rising into due prominence.

IV. As an organization, it is the chief object of the Church we represent to bring together all true christians upon a platform of mutual forbearance, common sympathies and fraternal love. We, therefore, offer the hand of fraternal greeting to all true followers of our blessed Redeemer, assuring them of our profound

interest in their welfare, and soliciting their kindly sympathies and prayers. Holding these views and aims, we hereby declare our desire to co-operate with any and all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ, in performing the great work which he has assigned his Church. We have formed an organization merely to make our labors more effective; and we are ready to form a corporate union with any body of christians upon the basis of those great doctrines which underlie the religion of Christ. Clinging only to those fundamental truths, without which Christianity could not exist, we are ready to submit all minor matters to the decision of the individual conscience.

BASIS OF UNION

1. BELIEF—

- (1) In god, as our Creator and Law Giver.
- (2) In Christ, as our Divine Mediator and Redeemer.
- (3) In the Holy Spirit, as our Comforter and Sanctifier.
- (4) In the Bible as inspired by God, and the supreme standard of appeal in all matters of religion.
- (5) In the sinfulness and lost condition of man.
- (6) In the doctrine that salvation is a free gift of God, through Christ, and can be received and enjoyed only by faith.
- (7) That love to God and men is the whole duty of man.
- (8) That those who accept and obey the Gospel in this world will be happy in the world to come; while those who reject the Gospel in this life will be miserable forever.

2. The right to hold and express opinions not conflicting with the above articles of belief, is freely conceded to each individual member of the Church.

3. Nothing more ought to be demanded as a prerequisite to admission into the Church than a credible profession of "repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

4. The body should be called by some name sanctioned by Scripture usage; either Christian Church, Church of Christ, or some other, equally significant and appropriate.

VI. With a view to forming and cultivating fraternal relationships with all christians who are like-minded with ourselves, we hereby invite correspondence from individual christians, independent local Churches, and other religious organizations. The President of the General Convention, or the Secretary of the same, will gladly answer all inquiries and give whatever information may be required.

May the God of all grace direct His people into a closer, more perfect unity, that the Saviour may be glorified and the world regenerated.⁵⁶

This expression of ecumenical possibilities and willingness on the part of the Christians was the principal accomplishment of the meeting in Graham and was a significant step for the Church.

On February 16, 1877, the Christians lost one of their greatest leaders of all time when death ended the earthly career of the vener-

able William B. Wellons. Closely associated with Whitley to the very end, the editor from his deathbed called "for Jesse," who came and remained with his benefactor during his last hours. Following arrangements previously made, Whitley conducted the funeral of the patriarch at the Suffolk Christian Church, assisted by Cornelius A. Apple.⁵⁷ Then, with unflagging zeal, the young minister devoted his abilities to continuing the work of his predecessor in the Christian Church.

In 1875 Whitley had formed a partnership with Major D. B. Dunbar and purchased the *Christian Sun* from the enfeebled Wellons. Whitley was the editor, Dunbar the secular editor, and C. A. Apple was associate editor of the paper. In addition to this work, the new editor had served as standing secretary of the Eastern Virginia Conference in 1874, president of the Sunday School Convention of that same Conference in 1875, and upon the passing of Wellons became pastor of the Suffolk Church.⁵⁸ His associate, Apple, after completing his college education, had become the minister of the Bethlehem, Liberty Spring, Hebron and Holy Neck Churches and, in addition, taught in a high school as he was "compelled to engage in other pursuits to enable me to support myself and family."⁵⁹ Elected secretary of the Southern Convention in 1866, Apple's capabilities were soon manifest, and he was requested to open the 1871 meeting of the Eastern Virginia Conference with an address. In complying, he expressed his concept of progress:

A mighty work remains to be done by the Church. A superstitious adherence to dead forms is to be overcome; infidelity, entrenching itself within the limits of philosophy and science, is to be attacked and crushed in its stronghold, and the civilization of this age is to be developed and moulded into a form consistent with the broad and elevated philanthropy of Jesus Christ.⁶⁰

In 1872 the veteran Thomas J. Kilby, who had served the Eastern Virginia Conference in many capacities for over twenty years, requested that he be excused from holding office further, and Apple was elected president of the body.⁶¹ Both Apple and Whitley were indefatigable ministers who had worked in close conjunction with Manning, the layman Moring, and others who wished to see the Church expand and grow. Great responsibility was delegated to each early in his career, and both were without question rapidly rising in prestige and power in the Church. They had ideas which they believed would enhance the position of the Christians, and they speedily prepared to put them into practice.

Lebanon Church in Caswell County, North Carolina, was host to the Convention in July, 1878. As vice-president of the body, Solomon Apple opened the meeting in the place of the departed Wellons. At

the request of Apple, the introductory address usually made by the president was delivered by J. T. Whitley. The scholarly minister chose for his subject "The Christian Church: Its Future Viewed In The Light Of Its Past." With the fervor and frankness of youth, he candidly appraised the Church and its shortcomings as well as its accomplishments. After briefly eulogizing Wellons and Alfred Iseley, both deceased former officials of the Convention, he summarized the history and progress of the Church. Then, citing the numerical strength of the Disciples of Christ at 350,000, the Methodist Protestants at 130,000, the Methodist Episcopalans at more than 2,000,000, and the Christians at 14,000, he criticized:

In comparison with the advancement of these sects, how strangely slow has been our own progress! From one thousand to fourteen thousand in eighty-five years! Looking at the question of success from the numerical standpoint, it must be sorrowfully confessed that our movement, while not a total failure, is yet very far from being a distinguished success.⁶²

Conceding that mere numerical strength is not a complete evaluation, the organizational progress of the Christians during the previous decade was highly praised as compared with half a century earlier when "little less than anarchy prevailed among us," and the Church was also credited with having made a favorable impression upon the world in general in its promotion of ecumenical union. He summarized the record of the Christians as "neither a total failure nor a grand success."

Whitley then reasoned that a lack of organizing executive ability explained the limited success of the Church in the past. "Something more than strong conviction and holy motive is needed," he proclaimed, and suggested that the failure to emphasize education had been a contributing factor to the Church's weakness. He considered the cultural requirements for ministers to have been far too low, with the result that "the broadest liberality has been coupled with the narrowest sectarianism." He included the laity in his criticism, although he admitted that the Church membership included respectably educated people. "For, disguise it as we may," he declared, "a cultivated, large-minded laity is as essential to the progress and highest success of a church as is an educated ministry." As a result of this deficiency, Whitley concluded:

. . . the great mass of our people have never clearly understood, and do not now fully comprehend, the philosophy of our denominational movement; that they do not clearly see the beauty and force of our principles, nor the magnificent possibilities of our denominational future.⁶³

In the second place, the failure to provide a workable plan for Missionary Operations and Church Extension had been a hindrance, according to Whitley, who elaborated:

The church that relies simply upon its good intentions and noble principles, and never lays definite plans, involving the expenditure of money, time, brains and labor, will find itself at last overwhelmed with mortifying failure.⁶⁴

Furthermore, the speaker accused the Church of failure to thoroughly circulate the *Christian Sun* throughout the membership, which would have increased the scope of its influence and assured the paper a sounder financial status. In addition, the Christians who were sufficiently gifted to do so should have produced tracts, pamphlets and books to a far greater extent than had been done to explain and expound "the various questions that concern our Church, and its distinctive tenets."

Whitley then suggested remedies that would relieve the plight of the Church. First, a sound financial plan must be devised so as to provide sufficient funds to enable its activities to progress and expand. Secondly, the educated status of the ministry had to be elevated; and, in the third place, more extensive use would have to be made of the printing press and its potentialities. Finally, he challenged, "Let us keep fully abreast of the age in which we live, in the methods of our work." He then concluded:

So far, I have said but little about the necessity of deep and true heart religion. Not that I undervalue the necessity of piety; but this lies at the basis of all true success, and is implied in all that I have said.⁶⁵

If the delegates arrived at the 1878 Convention complacent over the status of their Church, it is doubtful that they remained placid after hearing the introductory address, which "was listened to with profound attention throughout, and was much appreciated by all who heard it."⁶⁶ Serious and humiliating as Whitley's charges were, seldom, if ever, has a critique been presented in a more scholarly and dignified manner before a governing body of the southern Christian Church. His summation of the progress of the Church was severe, but his plan for future action was sound and merited approval. The text was not printed in the Minutes, however, because "there were in it certain statements, which, though important for members of the Convention to consider, it might not be expedient to publish to the world."⁶⁷ Apparently, the effect on the delegation was not entirely unfavorable as Whitley was elected president of the Convention after delivering the address. Determined to present his plans to the general public regardless of the disapproval of the Convention, the president resorted to his prerogative as editor of the *Christian Sun* and pub-

lished his address verbatim in the paper after the session adjourned.⁶⁸ This action provided the desired publicity for his ideas but may have added very little to his popularity.

In addition to his other offices, Whitley served with Cornelius A. Apple, John W. Boyd, Solomon Apple and Alexander Savage on the Committee on Publications. The most heated debate of the session took place when this Committee recommended a revision of the Declaration of the Principles of the Church. The weight of W. B. Wellons' influence was no longer available to combat the conservative element in the Convention, which staunchly opposed innovations more than ever. A deadlock of the session was finally avoided by the appointment of a special committee, composed of representatives from each of the three leading member Conferences, to study the proposed revision and report its conclusions at a special meeting of the Convention the following year.⁶⁹ The remainder of the agenda was devoted to various committee reports of less controversial nature and to the passage of appropriate resolutions of respect to the memories of the departed W. B. Wellons and Alfred Iseley.

Evidently, Whitley's challenge generated considerable animosity throughout the denomination, and opposition to the revision of the Principles proposed by the editor and his colleague, Apple, was soon apparent. The controversy became so heated that both men became disheartened and disillusioned. As past president of the Eastern Virginia Conference, Apple opened the 1878 meeting at Barrett's in Southampton County, Virginia, and then requested and was granted his release from the Conference. Shortly afterward, an editorial in the *Christian Sun* announced Apple's union with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and subsequent transfer to Alabama for reasons the editor considered wise not to print.⁷⁰ Whitley plunged into his duties as Convention president and visited all of the various conference meetings during the fall months of 1878 as a fraternal delegate. In his role as a Church executive he was cordially received at each and took an active part in the deliberations of the sessions. Although he was respectfully treated, by the end of the year Whitley became convinced that the plans he had proposed were not being accepted, and he became discouraged over his failure to inspire a substantial following of loyal supporters. As a result, he simply dropped out of sight in the Christian Church. No record has been found of any resignation or official dismissal from his duties and offices. J. Pressley Barrett, who succeeded him as editor of the *Christian Sun* in February 1879, made an editorial reference to "the parting word of my predecessor,"⁷¹ but if the statement gave any reasons for Whitley's action, they are unknown; the issue containing the article has not been preserved.

When the General Convention met in Suffolk, Virginia, on July 18 and 19, 1879, the special session was opened by William S. Long, the vice-president who had assumed the chair in the place of the departed Whitley. It is a somewhat peculiar fact that the Minutes of this meeting do not contain a single reference to the former president; although the records of the 1883 Convention state that Whitley had previously left the Church, they do not mention that he had become a Methodist Episcopal minister.⁷² The main item of business was the report of the Committee on Revision composed of J. N. Manning, W. S. Long, J. W. Wellons, D. A. Long, W. T. Walker, E. W. Beale, and M. B. Barrett. (Mills Burwell Barrett was the brother of Stephen S. Barrett and the son of Mills Barrett, who died in 1865, and grandson of Burwell Barrett, O'Kelly's contemporary.) The latter two were elected after the session began in order to replace Apple and Whitley on the committee, although the Minutes stated the action was "to fill vacancies" and named neither former member. On the second day of the session the Committee recommended that no change be made in the Declaration of Principles and the Form of Government. This was speedily adopted, and conservative adherence to the practices of the past was dominant as the policy of the leadership of the Christian Church.⁷³

After clearing the agenda of a few minor items, the Convention heard the presidential address. Expressing himself somewhat vaguely in favor of greater support, presumably financial, for the clergy and an increased emphasis on education in general, President Long devoted the bulk of his remarks to Christian union. This subject was uppermost in the minds of the Convention, inasmuch as negotiations for a merger with the Methodist Protestants and also with the Christian Union brethren led by J. V. B. Flack had been discussed for several years previously,⁷⁴ and denominational union was one of the cherished goals for which Whitley and Apple had contended. The speaker dealt with the subject in a somewhat abstract manner. "Here let me remind you brethren," he said, "*that a spirit of devotion is the strength of Christian Union.*" He continued:

The different denominations of Christians may endeavor to tie themselves together by laws and rules framed with ever so much wisdom; but in the absence of the growing piety of the different sections of the Church of Christ, the spirit of sectarianism will burst asunder all such ligaments with as much ease as Sampson did the withes and cords which were cast around his mighty limbs.⁷⁵

Long then explained that the Christian's goal was not to amalgamate the various religious bodies, nor to create the real and essential unity of the Church of Christ, for the latter had been accomplished by the Crucifixion. "Our object, then, is not to *create* essential unity, but to

manifest it," said the President, "to make a union of the followers of Jesus visible to the world." He then reminded his hearers of their great responsibility, for, he said, "If the church is God's instrument for molding the religious character of the world, the ministry is God's instrument for molding the church." In conclusion, Long urged the Christians to face the future courageously, trusting in the Lord, and to go forward with the work of the Church.⁷⁶ On this note the curtain was lowered for the time being on any proposed changes of principles or denominational mergers of the Christian Church in the South for the ensuing half a century. The *Manual* was revised and new editions were published in 1894, 1908, 1922, 1945, 1947, 1948, 1952 and 1960, with minor alterations in the sections on Church Government. A sixth principle was added calling for the union of all Christians, but this was implicit in the original five and did not change their meaning. There was no substantial progress toward union until the southerners joined the American Christian Convention in 1922, and there was no denominational merger until 1931 when the Christians and the Congregationalists united.

In 1904 William S. Long, reminiscing over the abortive attempt at revision twenty-five years earlier, recalled that Whitley had emerged into prominence among the Christians as a protege of Editor Wellons. "The elevation of this untried and ambitious man to two of the most important positions in the Church—Editor of the Church organ, and President of the Convention, was too much for him," was Long's opinion, "and was a grave mistake on the part of the Body." Describing both Whitley and Apple as "young and anxious for a change," Long related that they conducted a campaign by correspondence and publication to enlist supporters until finally, "The *Christian Sun* showed alarming symptoms of disloyalty to our cause." Ultimately, convinced of the futility of their efforts, both men left the Church.⁷⁷ The specific changes advocated by the two young ministers are not clearly defined in the records that have survived, but in view of ideas delineated in Whitley's address to the Convention, it hardly seems possible that they could have been detrimental to the welfare of the Church. At any rate, they were defeated and the Church was deprived of two energetic and intelligent ministers it could ill afford to lose.

Throughout the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth centuries the Christian Church consistently opposed making any doctrinal statement other than the acceptance of the Bible as its creed. W. B. Wellons, long a proponent of this doctrinal position, finally became convinced that a further elaboration was necessary, and it was largely due to his efforts that the *Manual* was finally issued containing a statement of the principles. Admirable as were these cardi-

nal points, they were still couched in such general terms and permitted such broad latitude in interpretation that on occasion they actually fostered the very type of misunderstanding they were designed to prevent. The summary of Christian beliefs failed to satisfy some of the ministers who were ambitious for the Church membership to expand rapidly, but it was acceptable to the majority of the Christian leadership which preferred to grow slowly rather than sacrifice its cherished principles. It was in large measure this adamant refusal to further clarify its doctrinal position as a religious body which retarded the growth of the Christian Church during the first century of its existence.

Although the slow numerical growth of the Church is undeniable, the complete accuracy of Whitley's appraisal in other respects is debatable. Unquestionably, the program of the Christians in education, missions and related fields was accelerated and broadened in scope after the Lebanon meeting, and this may have been due in part to Whitley's critical charges. In 1894 the Church completed its first century of existence; this is an appropriate year to evaluate the past accomplishments of the Christians in various fields and to consider possibilities for their future development.

Footnotes

- ¹ *Conferences*, 63.
- ² *Ibid*, 90.
- ³ *Ibid*, 92.
- ⁴ *Sun*, June 18, 1851.
- ⁵ *Ibid*.
- ⁶ *Palladium*, November 15, 1839. Also, Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 152-153.
- ⁷ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 56-57; also, Levi Purviance, *The Biography of Elder David Purviance, With His Memoirs: Containing His Views on Baptism, The Divinity of Christ, and the Atonement*, (Dayton, Ohio: Published for the Author by B. F. and G. W. Wells, 1848), 96.
- ⁸ *Sun*, July 26, 1854.
- ⁹ *Palladium*, November 13, 1844.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid*, October 2, 1847.
- ¹¹ *Herald*, December 7, 1854.
- ¹² *Ibid*.
- ¹³ *Ibid*.
- ¹⁴ *Sun*, October 25, 1854.
- ¹⁵ *Conferences*, 111.
- ¹⁶ See H. Shelton Smith, *In His Image, But . . .*, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1972), for a complete account of the attitudes and activities of the southern Churches regarding slavery.
- ¹⁷ *Sun*, February 22, 1855.
- ¹⁸ *Southern Convention 1856*, 3-6.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*, 8.
- ²⁰ *Ibid*, 10-11.
- ²¹ *Ibid*, 17.
- ²² *Ibid*, 21.
- ²³ MacClenny, *O'Kelly*, 174. The printed Minutes of this Conference do not include this address.
- ²⁴ *Sun*, March 5, 1858.
- ²⁵ *Ibid*, April 23, 1858.
- ²⁶ *Ibid*, April 30, 1858.
- ²⁷ *Ibid*, April 23, 1858.
- ²⁸ *Ibid*, May 7, 1858.
- ²⁹ *Ibid*, May 15, 1858.
- ³⁰ *Ibid*.
- ³¹ *Ibid*.
- ³² Wellons, *Christians, South*, 1-4.
- ³³ *Minutes of the Thirty-Sixth Annual Session of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference, Held at Hank's Chapel, Chatham County, N. C., October 10th, 11th, and 12th, 1861*, (Suffolk, Virginia: Printed at the Christian Sun Office, 1862), 10. Hereinafter cited as *Carolina and Virginia Conference 1861*.
- ³⁴ Charles F. Pitts, *Chaplains in Gray*, (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1959), 137. Also, J. William Jones, *Christ in the Camp*, (Atlanta: The Martin and Hoyt Company, 1887), 21.
- ³⁵ *Minutes of the Fortieth Annual Session of the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference, Held at Oak Level, Franklin Co., N. C., (Privately Printed, 1865)*, 12.
- ³⁶ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 258.
- ³⁷ James W. Wellons and Robert Howell Holland, *Life and Labors of Rev. William Brock Wellons, D.D., Who Was a Minister and Member of the Eastern Virginia Christian Conference for Nearly Thirty-Three Years, Editor of the Christian Sun for Nearly Twenty-five Years, and President of the General Convention of the Christian Church*, (Raleigh, North Carolina: Edwards, Broughton and Company, 1881), 190, 215. Hereinafter cited as Wellons, *Life of Wellons*.

- ³⁸ *Proceedings of the General Convention of the Christian Church, Including the Sessions of 1866, 1867 and 1870, With An Address by Rev. W. B. Wellons, Pres't*, (Suffolk, Virginia: Christian Board of Publication, 1870), 6-7. Hereinafter cited as *Convention*, 1866, 1867 and 1870. Beginning in 1870, the Minutes of the member conferences of the Convention and of the Convention itself, if it met that year, were published by the *Christian Sun* office in a bound volume known as *The Christian Annual*. Conference and Convention Minutes after 1870 will hereinafter be cited as *Annual*, with the designation of the year of the meeting.
- ³⁹ *Ibid*, 7-8.
- ⁴⁰ James W. Wellons, brother of William B. Wellons, never married. He became affectionately known far and wide as "Uncle Wellons." When he became seventy years of age, a room was prepared for him in a dormitory at Elon College where he resided until he became ninety-eight. He then moved to the Masonic Home in Greensboro, North Carolina, where he died at the age of one hundred and one years.
- ⁴¹ *Convention, 1866, 1867 and 1870*, 9-10.
- ⁴² *Ibid*, 13.
- ⁴³ *Ibid*, 14.
- ⁴⁴ *The Principles and Government of the Christian Church: Also, A Directory for the Worship of God*, (Suffolk, Virginia: Christian Board of Publication, 1867). This pamphlet became known as the *Christian Manual*, and later issues carried that name. Hereinafter cited as *Manual*.
- ⁴⁵ *Manual*, 11.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 40.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 76.
- ⁴⁸ *Minutes of the Thirty-Third Annual Meeting of the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference, Held at Pope's Chapel, Granville Co., N. C.*, (Suffolk: Southern Christian Book Concern, 1858), 24. Hereinafter cited as *Carolina and Virginia Conference 1858*. Also, *Minutes of the Forty-First Annual Session of the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference, Held at O'Kelly's Chapel, Moringsfield, Chatham Co., N. C.*, (Privately Printed, 1867), 14. Hereinafter cited as *Carolina and Virginia Conference 1866*.
- ⁴⁹ *Convention, 1866, 1867 and 1870*, 23, 38. The Virginia Valley secession is generally attributed to dissension over the "principles" adopted by the 1867 Convention at which the Virginia Valley Conference was not represented.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 29, 36-37.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid*, 19.
- ⁵² *Ibid*, 21.
- ⁵³ *Ibid*, 25, 27.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid*, Advertising Department, 1-22.
- ⁵⁵ *Annual 1874*, 10, 33.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 19-20.
- ⁵⁷ Wellons, *Life of Wellons*, 276-303.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 270; *Annual 1874*, 33; *Annual 1875*, 53.
- ⁵⁹ *Annual 1872*, 17.
- ⁶⁰ *Annual 1871*, 20; *Convention, 1866, 1867 and 1870*, 5.
- ⁶¹ *Annual 1872*, 5.
- ⁶² *Sun*, August 23, 1878.
- ⁶³ *Ibid*.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid*.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid*.
- ⁶⁶ *Annual 1878*, 7.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 19.
- ⁶⁸ *Sun*, August 23, 1878.
- ⁶⁹ *Annual 1874*, 13, 20.
- ⁷⁰ *Sun*, November 29, 1878; also *Annual 1878*, 47.
- ⁷¹ *Sun*, February 21, 1879.
- ⁷² *Ibid*, December 6, 1894. According to this article, in 1894 Whitley was pastor of the Broad Street Methodist Episcopal Church, Richmond, Virginia. Whitley left many

friends in the Suffolk Christian Church and returned there as guest minister to deliver a sermon shortly before his death.

⁷³ *Annual 1879*, 5-9; *Annual 1883*, 24.

⁷⁴ Wellons, *Life of Wellons*, 198-203; *Annual 1874*, 21.

⁷⁵ *Annual 1879*, 13.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 14.

⁷⁷ *Sun*, May 23, 1904.

Chapter VI

Education

When James O'Kelly was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he bitterly opposed the founding of Cokesbury College, for to him the mission of the Church was to preach Christian piety to both the converted Christians and the unconverted sinners. Education was a personal or a governmental matter but not the business of organized religion. In 1918 William Allen Harper, at that time president of Elon College, wrote:

In the hostility or skeptical attitude towards education on the part of Mr. O'Kelly and the other leaders of our church is found the chief reason for the relatively slow progress of our cause.¹

The stand taken by O'Kelly has been vigorously defended on the grounds that he was not opposed to learning; he simply did not consider it the business of the Church, and others agreed with him. Regardless of the opinions of their early leaders, the Christians recognized the value of spiritual training for their members through Sabbath Schools, or as they were usually known, Sunday Schools; they took action accordingly about as early as most of the southern Churches with the exception of the Presbyterians, who usually pioneered in educational endeavors.

The first recorded mention of Church schools was a resolution passed by the Eastern Virginia Conference in 1841:

Resolved that this Conference with the extent of its influence promote the cause of Sunday School by precept and example.²

In 1846 a Conference committee was appointed to promote the matter with the result that all churches in the organization were earnestly urged to develop "the permanent establishment of Sunday

schools."³ The North Carolina and Virginia Conference records do not mention the subject until 1849 when John R. Holt, Bennett Hazel, and Alfred Iseley were named to a Committee on Sabbath Schools. Before adjournment of the session, a lengthy report was presented which began apologetically:

Your committee have not the pleasure to present to you but a small number of Sabbath Schools, within our bounds, in the conducting of which our own members have shared even a portion of the labor. It would seem that the Christians so called are not in advance of others in a work of so great importance that by attention to it, might find employment for all those graces and feelings characteristic of the true Christian.⁴

However, the major emphasis of the statement was an urge for greater activity:

Such an enterprise would give success to the gospel, since minds instructed in the written word, form better avenues to the heart than those which are yet to be taught before they can deeply feel the power of divine truth . . . Let not the devoted Sabbath School teacher despair amidst his labors; he is contributing to the accomplishment of the good and great work, even the salvation of man. We are clearly of the opinion, that our churches be recommended not to neglect or delay attending to this, and that our preachers attach due importance thereto amidst their labors.⁵

Almost no information is available on the Sunday Schools during the two decades after the work was begun. Maintenance during the War years must have necessarily been difficult and progress slow, if at all, but the program was not allowed to die and renewed emphasis was placed upon it as the Church slowly readjusted its affairs after peace was made. In 1870 William S. Long reported to the North Carolina and Virginia Conference:

Many children that would doubtless grow up in ignorance are receiving intellectual culture in the Sabbath School. In the midst of wide-spread desolation we must, as true patriots and christians, provide for the destitute among us in this particular as far as we can. Many are taught in the Sabbath School to read the Word of God, that would never acquire the knowledge. Others there are, sadly neglected by those whom God and nature have constituted their proper guardians, now sharing these benefits.⁶

Committees on Sabbath Schools were at work in the six year old Deep River Valley Conference of North Carolina and the Georgia and Alabama Christian Conference, while the Eastern Virginia Conference expressed gratitude that their situation had changed from a few scattered and poorly attended schools to 18 units in which 212 officers were working with 1,194 pupils.⁷

The result of the growing enthusiasm for the program in Virginia was the organization in 1867 of the Sunday School Convention of

the Eastern Virginia Christian Conference, which held an annual meeting to promote its program. In 1871 the officers were W. B. Wellons, President; R. H. Holland, Vice-President; C. A. Apple, Secretary; and Thomas J. Kilby, Treasurer. J. N. Manning and J. T. Whitley met with these officers, delegates, and fifty-one superintendents at Berea in Nansemond County, Virginia, where the two-day program included a discussion of the duties and qualifications of teachers and the endorsement of a *Manual of Instructions* prepared by Apple. Seventeen churches reported a total of 78 officers, 186 teachers, and 1,222 pupils, with a high average attendance and respectable libraries in all but three schools.⁸ It is of interest to note that the leadership in the training program was guided by the leading members of the clergy and the laity and that the meeting at Berea was an all-male gathering. The responsibility for the Sunday Schools was not delegated to the women and children at all, although the teaching staff undoubtedly included many worthy women of the Church.

In 1874 the Convention endorsed Whitley's *The Little Christian* for distribution in the schools.⁹ Unfortunately, this periodical had a short life, and it was not until the Fifteenth Annual Session of the Convention met at Mount Carmel, Isle of Wight County, Virginia, in 1882 that another paper was found for the pupils. This was the *Sunday School Worker* published in Raleigh, North Carolina. At the 1882 meeting also a constitution was adopted for the organization, and J. Pressley Barrett was delegated to attend the North Carolina Sunday School Convention as a fraternal delegate. A committee had been appointed to prepare a catechism for the Sunday Schools but requested that the matter be referred to the next General Convention of the Church.¹⁰ The minutes of the next meeting of that body, which took place in 1886, do not mention the matter, but the use of the International Lessons and Sunday School literature issued by the Christian Publishing House at Dayton, Ohio, was approved.¹¹ In view of the position of the Christians on written creeds, it is no wonder that plans for a catechism received little support. This action was not final, however, for the General Convention in 1902 appointed W. S. Long, N. G. Newman and J. O. Atkinson a committee "to prepare a Catechism for our denomination."¹² They were also to prepare a set of Bylaws, a Pledge, and Rules and Regulations for the purpose of organizing the Christian young people for all church activities. Nothing is known of the attitude of these ministers toward their assignment, but no report of any committee action has been found. There was never a catechism prepared for the southern Christian Church.

In 1894 the Centennial birthday of the Church was commemorated by an elaborate special issue of the *Christian Sun*, which con-

tained among other interesting and historical items the following statistics for the General Convention:

Conferences	Number Members	Number in Sunday School
Valley Va.	300	300
Eastern Va.	4340	3050
N. C. & Va.	7055	4343
Deep River, N. C.	1564	771
Ga. & Ala.	<u>1332</u>	<u>687</u>
TOTAL	14591	8156 [9151]
Colored Conf.	<u>8784</u>	<u>8932</u>
GRAND TOTAL	23375	12088 [18083] ¹³

(The totals of the last column were incorrect in the publication due to typographical errors and the correct figures are given in the brackets.)

Encouraged by the growth of the schools, the Convention began plans for a teacher training program and also called for a convention of the Young People of the Southern Convention to plan a better organized and more effective work for youth in the Church.

By 1910 the Committee on Teacher-Training had already prepared and circulated Volume I of Sunday School lesson aids for the education of teachers. Composed of fifty-two lessons, the book had been approved by the International Sunday School Association, and Volume II containing similar material was ready to be presented to that body for inspection. The latter contained:

- Five Lessons on the Teacher By W. A. Harper
- Five Lessons on the Pupil B. W. C. Wicker
- Four Lessons on the Sunday School ... By W. P. Lawrence
- Five Lessons on the Bible as Literature . By J. O. Atkinson
- Seven Lessons on Biblical Doctrine . By Rev. J. U. Newman
- Five Lessons on Private Bible Antiquities .. By Rev. G. O. Lankford
- Four Lessons on Soul-Winning By Rev. H. E. Rountree
- Three Lessons on Giving By Rev. A. W. Andes
- Thirteen Lessons on Missions By Rev. M. T. Morrill
- Five Lessons on Denominational History By W. E. MacClenny¹⁴

The Sunday School Board of the Convention also urged a greater interdenominational cooperation and expressed the hope that a large number of teachers could attend the World's Sunday School Convention in Washington in 1911. The Board also recommended increasing the number of adult classes as much as possible.

As a result of the Young People's General Convention, by 1912 27 classes and 9 Christian Endeavor Societies were organized, bringing the total in the Church to 70 organized classes, 32 Christian Endeavor Societies, and 41 Teacher-Training Classes.¹⁵ With proper organization and trained leadership the spiritual education of youth in the Church forged ahead. This progress enabled Miss Lucy M. Eldredge, the first Field Secretary of the Convention, to proudly report in 1922 that 20,303, or 74½ percent of the Church membership, was enrolled in 206 Sunday Schools, with 1,324 members participating in 53 Christian Endeavor Societies. Furthermore, a Sunday School and Christian Endeavor Convention had been organized in the Georgia and Alabama Christian Conference.¹⁶

An outgrowth of the Sunday School program was the interest aroused within the Church for participation in the Christian Endeavor movement, which had been founded in New England by Dr. Francis E. Clark. When the General Convention met in Burlington, North Carolina, in 1896, President W. W. Staley suggested the formation of Young People's Societies of Christian Endeavor and a ministerial committee composed of W. J. Laine, C. C. Peel and J. L. Foster was appointed to investigate the matter. "The phenomenal growth of the Y.P.S. of Christian Endeavor, speaks louder and in words more commendable than anything your committee could say," was their report, and the new movement had its beginning in the Christian Church, South.¹⁷ Two years later the Convention, meeting in Raleigh, North Carolina, created a Standing Committee composed of M. W. Butler, R. H. Peel and J. L. Foster to supervise the work.¹⁸ In 1900 the *Christian Sun* inaugurated a Christian Endeavor Society column in its pages and two years later societies had been organized at Elon College, Burlington, and Raleigh in North Carolina, and at Bethlehem and Newport News in Virginia.¹⁹

Christian Endeavor had been designed for interdenominational participation, and as the movement progressed in the Christian Church societies were organized in the Methodist Protestant, Presbyterian, and other churches. By 1912 there were 32 societies among the Christians and this number gradually rose to a peak of 53 in 1922.²⁰ The program of Christian Endeavor was skillfully organized into Junior, Intermediate and Senior societies so that there was a place in its activities for every age group in the church. The literature of the national organization was expertly designed and distributed through the national Christian Endeavor publishing house in Boston. It consisted of weekly topical programs, calendar booklets for daily personal devotions, and similar aids. The educational, cultural and spiritual programs of the societies were of incalculable value to the entire membership of the church and especially to the youth. From

the arduous task of the Juniors in memorizing the Scriptural passages and other matter necessary to win the prized "String of Pearls," to participation of all three age groups in formal programs at state and national Christian Endeavor conventions, the educational value of the societies was paramount. The high esteem in which the southern Christians held the movement was evident when Francis E. Clark, the founder, was invited to deliver the baccalaureate sermon to the 1923 graduating class of Elon College. Introduced by Elon's president, William Allen Harper, as "Father Endeavorer Clark,"²¹ the speaker asserted:

To be educated in these days is not simply to be able to construe Latin and Greek, not simply to be able to turn Latin odes into poor English poetry, but is to know something of many things, and, if possible, everything about one thing.²²

The educational process begun in youth through Christian Endeavor, while primarily for religious emphasis, could also inspire the effort to acquire a broader secular education which "Father" Clark deemed so essential; and thus the societies could, and often did, serve a dual role in the Church's program. Better trained churchmen and citizens in general was the result.

Both Christian Endeavor and the Sunday Schools, working in conjunction with each other, led the Southern Convention in 1908 to call for an organization of the Young People of the Church in order to accelerate the activity of the training program. The Christians were slow in beginning religious education for their youth, but once begun the program proved to be an invaluable phase of the work of the Christian Church in the South.

It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that the Christians officially undertook the sponsorship of any institution devoted to secular education. Previous to that time many individual Christians had been teachers in classical schools, often using the meeting houses for their classes. Around 1800 and possibly earlier Daniel Turrentine conducted classes in "an old field school house" adjacent to Providence Meeting House in Orange County, North Carolina. Jesse Turner, who later became nationally prominent as a judge in Arkansas, was one of the pupils. (The Meeting House later became known as New Providence and was located on the outskirts of the town of Graham when Alamance County was formed in 1849.)²³ After the schoolmaster's death in 1824 his son, John Steele Turrentine, continued the school. In addition, James Mulholland, Abel, John and Benjamin Rainey, Joe Thomas, Jonathan Freeland, Jerry Whidbee, Jonathan Worth, W. F. Bason, C. F. Faucette, John Faucette, John Mebane, Leonard Prather, William Holt Turrentine, and several others held classes at Provi-

dence intermittently.²⁴ Prather and Benjamin Rainey were Christian ministers. There were doubtless many such schools conducted by individuals throughout the area covered by the Christian Church, but only an occasional mention of them has been found.

Daniel W. Kerr inaugurated institutional education among the Christians when he opened Wake Forest Pleasant Grove Academy near Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1826.²⁵ Twelve years later he moved his school to Orange County, near Mount Zion Church, under the name of Mount Pleasant Academy. An advertisement announcing the opening of the institution on January 15, 1836, was published in the *Hillsborough Recorder* with the following curriculum offered:

1st Class—English Grammar, Penmanship, Geography, with the use of Maps and Globes, History, Philosophy, Astronomy, Chemistry, Rhetoric, &c.

2nd Class—Latin, Greek and French Languages. The price of tuition will be five dollars per session for the first class, and ten dollars per session for the second class. A session will consist of five months. At the expiration of the first session there will be a public examination and a vacation of two weeks. The subscriber will render every possible attention to the morals and habits of the students placed under his care.

Board can be had convenient to the academy at five dollars per month, and in good families.²⁶

Shortly afterwards the name of the school was changed to Junto Academy and as such it was widely advertised. Kerr had his problems, apparently, for in 1841 he complained to the editor of the *Christian Palladium* that he suffered from "a strong and tremendous combination of sectarian bigots to prostrate my Academy." To combat this obstacle the principal queried, "Will not the Christians sustain me?"²⁷ Evidently they did because the school continued in operation until Kerr's death in 1850.

In 1839, the same year Mount Pleasant opened its doors, the *Hillsborough Recorder* published an announcement from John R. Holt, another Christian minister, that he would "open a school near his residence in Orange County, four miles west of Haw River and three miles from the Chatham County line," in September of that year. Classical studies were to be offered, "designed principally to be preparatory to admittance into our University, or any similar institutions in this country."²⁸ When Graham was laid out in 1849 for the seat of the new county of Alamance, Holt moved his school to the town where it was soon considered "highly creditable to the place." Having known William H. Eley when both men were students at the University of North Carolina, the principal employed him as his assistant. Later Albert Galatin Anderson, a minister who had conducted a small school of his own, was associated with Holt.²⁹

Meanwhile, the interest of the Church was so aroused by the efforts made by some of its ministers to conduct schools that the North Carolina and Virginia Conference in 1841 created a committee to devise "a plan for educating pious young men for the ministry."³⁰ Four years later the Conference proposed the formation of an Education Society to encourage developments. This led to the study through a committee in 1849 of "the propriety of establishing a seminary of learning at the town of Graham." Holt, Hazel, Fowler, Cole, Iseley, and Kerr formed a committee which recommended to the 1850 Conference that Graham Institute be founded.³¹ Without further delay trustees were appointed and other conferences invited to join in the enterprise. In the same year the Eastern Virginia Conference willingly accepted the invitation and elected its trustees for the school.³² The outcome of these endorsements was a deed dated August 2, 1850, to one and one-half acres of land in Graham, North Carolina, from John Harden to "Bennet Hazell, John R. Holt, Eli F. Watson and William Tarpley . . . a committee in behalf of the Christian Church to purchase a lot . . . and cause to be erected thereon a male academy." The purchase price was \$62.³³ On July 16, 1851, the *Christian Sun* published a copy of an Act to incorporate the trustees of Graham Institute, who were E. F. Watson, John Trollinger, Chesley F. Faucette, Pleasant A. Holt, Alfred Apple, Joseph B. Hinton, T. Bolling, Henry B. Hayes, Thomas J. Kilby, William B. Wellons, H. L. Eppes and Edward H. Herbert.³⁴ By the cooperation of the two Conferences, Graham Institute became a reality and though many obstacles would have to be surmounted in the years ahead, the Christian Church had begun the official sponsorship of secular education.

John R. Holt was the logical choice for principal of the new institution, and William H. Eley was approved as his assistant. The first session began on July 7, 1852, in a new two-story brick building located on what is today South Maple Street in Graham.³⁵ Classes were conducted in Latin, Greek, French, Mathematics, Navigation, Geology, Astronomy, Mental, Moral and Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Rhetoric, Logic and English. Both monthly and annual examinations were to be held "which the public are solicited to attend." Tuition was \$10 per session for elementary branches of English and \$15 per session for other courses, while gratuitous instruction would be given any young man "preparing for the Ministry in any of the Protestant denominations of the day." Board was available near the school for \$6 to \$7 per month.³⁶

Only a few fragments of data have been found which contain any information about the early years of the school. The North Carolina and Virginia Conference was pleased in 1852 over its "prosperous condition," but the next year sought a plan for "raising funds for the relief

of Graham Institute."³⁷ Attendance was probably encouraging, but the Christian Church soon learned that the tuition of the students did not furnish sufficient funds to maintain a boarding school and the financial plight of the Institute rapidly became worse. About 1856 Holt retired as principal and returned to Chatham County where he taught at New Hope Academy until 1866 when he moved to Randolph County and taught in Shiloh Academy until his death March 22, 1871.³⁸

In 1856 Graham Institute opened under the direction of Job H. Swift, principal, and Edwin W. Beale, assistant. These two ministers failed to improve the financial condition, for in the same year the North Carolina and Virginia Conference delegated Elders Alfred Iseley and Josiah McCulloch to confer with the Trustees of the Institute in order to devise plans for resuscitating it.³⁹ The following year the Eastern Virginia Conference, regretting that the school had "nearly failed financially and denominationally," offered to join in the effort to revive the enterprise.⁴⁰ The Institute was also brought to the attention of the Southern Christian Convention at its organizational meeting in 1856. Burwell N. Hopkins, Thomas J. Fowler, R. Rawls, Robert H. Holland, and Josiah McCully (McCulloch) were named a committee to confer with the Board of Trustees and the Building Committee of the institution and present their conclusions to the next session of the Convention.⁴¹ Two years later the committee reported to the Convention that the Institute, with the consent of the Conferences, had "passed into the hands of a joint Stock Company, who propose in the future to conduct it as a denominational school," and agents had been appointed to solicit \$4,000 in additional funds for the purpose. William B. Wellons was president of the Stockholders and he requested the Convention to take the school "under its fostering care" by electing a Board of Visitors to supervise it. The proposal was accepted and Thomas J. Fowler, A. L. Hill, A. Moring, H. L. Eppes, E. F. Watson, Jubilee Smith, and Robert H. Holland were duly elected.⁴²

The Institute had suspended operations while these negotiations were taking place, but the combined efforts of the Conferences and the Convention enabled it to reopen in 1859 under the supervision of William H. Doherty (Dougherty), who had previously served as professor of Belles Lettres under President Horace Mann at Antioch College. He was also a minister and his membership was transferred from the Miami Christian Conference in Ohio to the North Carolina and Virginia body. Unquestionably a trained educator, Doherty made the school coeducational and added Bookkeeping, Pencil Drawing and Music to the curriculum. Assisting him on the faculty were Mrs. Daniel Hardin, Matron and Teacher of Music, C. R. King, and the

principal's daughters, the Misses I. E. (Belle) and M. A. (Mary) Doherty. The term was twenty weeks, with tuition of \$10 for the Primary Department, \$15 for the Secondary Department, \$25 for the High School Department, with \$15 for Music and \$10 each for French, German and Drawing. Especial emphasis was given to a "Biblical class" conducted by the Principal in Hebrew, Greek, Church History and Sacred Rhetoric for "pious Young Men, preparing for the Christian Ministry."⁴³ A new charter was issued January 21, 1859, by the North Carolina Legislature to Alfred Iseley, John Faucette, Peter R. Harden, Bennett Hazel (Hayzell), and Willis Sellars, incorporators of Graham College. The Trustees named were William H. Doherty, Thomas J. Fowler, Peter R. Harden, Bennett Hazel, John Faucette, William H. Faucette, Alfred Moring, William B. Wellons, Thomas J. Kilby, Robert H. Holland, Edward C. Riddick, Meredith H. Watkins, Jubilee Smith, James Minnis, and John Walker. On May 27, 1859, John Harden deeded to the Trustees for \$142.50 the 5.7 acres on which the building stood, and in March, 1859, the new school opened "under the most favorable auspices."⁴⁴

No roll of the student body of the college is known to exist although seventy were enrolled in 1859.⁴⁵ William S. Long and his brother, Daniel A. Long, both later to become prominent educators in the Christian Church, were among the number. David F. Jones, who represented the Christian Church on the foreign mission field, and Eli Tinin Iseley also attended the college.

The revitalization of the school guided by the genius of the new Principal seemed assured of success, but an unforeseen problem soon marred the picture. Doherty was an honor graduate of the Royal Belfast College in his native Ireland and within a few years after his arrival in the United States in 1849 had become a Christian minister.⁴⁶ He had come to the southern Christians highly recommended; the North Carolina and Virginia Conference had entrusted him with several positions of responsibility in the Church, and the lectures and sermons he delivered before the Eastern Virginia Conference were highly praised. However, Doherty had an unsuspected weakness for alcohol which manifested itself after he became associated with the College. This was aggravated by the demoralizing conditions attendant upon the outbreak of the Civil War, and his addiction became steadily worse until in 1861 he was accused of "intemperance and falsehood."⁴⁷ The investigation of the charges which naturally followed was not acted upon until five years later when the North Carolina and Virginia Conference dismissed the educator from its membership. Doherty did not allow this disgraceful episode to ruin his life entirely, for he eventually mastered his affliction and died in the city of Washington in 1890 at the age of eighty.⁴⁸ Because of this affair, the

Principal's connection with the college was severed and its operation was assumed by two men named Brem and Bray. After two years the frustrations of war conditions forced them to admit defeat, and Graham College closed its doors in 1863. This was no reflection upon the ability of the Christian Church to operate a college, for virtually every academic institution in the South was forced to suspend activities before the end of the War in 1865.

The college was in debt when it closed, and the trustees were forced to sell the property on September 1, 1863, in order to satisfy a claim of \$175.50 due to B. F. Roney. Henry J. B. Clark and Alexander Miller, trading as Clark and Miller, were the high bidders at the sheriff's sale and paid \$4,500 for the building and grounds of the school.⁴⁹ After discharging the indebtedness, the remainder of the funds was invested in Confederate bonds and put aside for a new beginning after the War. Unfortunately, when peace finally came, the bonds were worthless paper and Graham College a sad memory for the Christian Church. The academic building was used for a tobacco factory until 1869 when Clark, who had become sole owner of the property, sold it to Mrs. Mary E. Harden, the wife of J. W. Harden, of Graham for \$1,000.⁵⁰

William S. Long, who had preached and taught school in Halifax County, Virginia, during the War, returned to Graham when the conflict ended and opened a high school. The success of the endeavor inspired Long to seek means for expansion and on November 4, 1870, he published the following offer in the *Christian Sun*:

"I propose, 1. To allow the denomination the use of my buildings in Graham for a school, and I agree to keep them in good order and suitable condition.

2. That the school be arranged to afford instruction to young men preparing for the ministry, and at the same time conduct a high school in which others may qualify themselves for teaching and other pursuits.

3. That the Conference employ one competent instructor and place him in the school with myself as joint principal.

4. That one-third of the tuition fees go towards the salary of the teacher the Conferences may employ. The remainder to myself as wages and for keeping up repairs to the premises.

5. That this arrangement continue five or ten years, or until a school can be established elsewhere.

6. That each Conference acceding to this proposition elect two directors, whose duty it will be to arrange a course of study, text-books, tuition, &c., and exercise a general oversight of the school.⁵¹

The North Carolina and Virginia Conference of that year approved of the proposition, but the Eastern Virginia Conference, which had been deliberating over plans for opening a school of its own, decided it would be unwise "to abandon our enterprise to unite with our North Carolina brethren in the establishment of a school at Graham."⁵²

Undaunted by his failure to establish a denominational school, Long forged ahead with his own means as rapidly as possible. On December 30, 1871, he purchased the old Graham College property from Mrs. Harden for \$2,500,⁵³ repaired and refurbished the buildings and opened Graham High School in 1872. His brother, Daniel A. Long, who had formerly conducted a school in Rockingham County, Virginia, joined the enterprise as co-principal. Within a year fifty-eight students were enrolled in the institution.⁵⁴ In 1874 Daniel A. Long purchased the property from his brother and on March 3, 1875, had the school incorporated as Graham High School. Because of the growth of the student body, William W. Staley, also a Christian minister and an alumnus of the school, was added to the teaching staff in which capacity he served for several years.⁵⁵ The continued success of the Longs encouraged them to meet the increasing demand for education on a high level by securing an amendment to their charter in 1881 which changed the name of the school to Graham Normal College.⁵⁶ Daniel A. Long served as president of the new institution until 1883 when he was elected president of Antioch College at Yellow Springs, Ohio, and William S. Long succeeded him as the head of the college in Graham.

Mrs. W. P. Lawrence, nee Annie Graham, was a student at the Longs' school and in 1964 described the institution as she remembered it:

The College was a two-story brick building on the south edge of Graham. Inside the structure, on each floor was a central hall with a classroom on each side of these halls—that is, two classrooms upstairs, two downstairs. The building faced east. Behind it, about fifty or seventy-five feet, was the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. N. Clendenin, where young women students roomed and boarded (Mrs. Clendenin was a sister of W. S. and D. A. Long). The Clendenin home was a two story frame dwelling which was connected to the College by a covered walkway. Behind the College to the north and a little farther away than the Clendenin residence was a row of single rooms. Here the male students roomed. They got their meals at the Clendenin home. In addition to the boarding students—a small group—there were several day students.

Miss Lena Beale, the teacher of music, lived in the Clendenin home, but the other faculty members lived in the town of Graham. Reverend N. G. Newman, an instructor to the school, shepherded the student body each Sunday on its weekly trek from the College through Graham to Providence Church on the north side of the village. Here by requirement the students attended church services.⁵⁷

Of the many students who attended either of the schools conducted by the Long brothers, only a few can be positively identified. William Wesley Staley, Peter Thomas Klapp, Stephen I. Ellis, Malcolm L.

Hurley, D. M. Williams, Alfred F. Iseley, and Jeremiah Holt were Christian ministers who had attended Graham High School. The students at Graham Normal College included members of the Long, Foster, Fonville, Turrentine, Sellars, Aldridge, Holt, Parker, Williamson, Stockard, Albright, Harden, Clendenin, Newman, Foust, Hall, Cook, Fleming, and many other families of North Carolina and Virginia. To accommodate the increasing number of students in 1884, the faculty was enlarged to include C. W. Smedes, A. B. (University of North Carolina); Captain J. L. Scott, A.B. (Davidson); J. L. Foster, B.E. (Graham); and Mrs. James A. Graham (Hillsborough). Later Henry Jerome Stockard, John Urquhart Newman and Silas A. Holleman were added to the staff.⁵⁸

Of the faculty and students associated together at Graham Normal College three became presidents of larger North Carolina institutions: William S. Long of Elon College, at Elon College; Henry Jerome Stockard of Peace Female Institute (now Peace College), at Raleigh; and Julius Foust of State Normal and Industrial School (now the University of North Carolina at Greensboro), at Greensboro. Daniel A. Long served Antioch College at Yellow Springs, Ohio, and later became president of Union Christian College at Merom, Indiana. Several became members of college faculties while others entered the legal profession or the world of business and industry. Quite a number of the female students became the wives of their former classmates. The notable success achieved by many of the group in later life is a credit to the standards and leadership of the school.

In eastern Virginia as early as 1820 James Arnold conducted a school near Holy Neck Christian Church. The following year Benjamin Bullock, pastor of the church, began teaching in the same vicinity. During the ensuing decade he was followed by James M. Bailey, Kenna Chapman, James Babb, James Perry, Blake B. B. Baker, and Willis Holland in the same capacity.⁵⁹ In January 1852 William B. Wellons, who seemed to have sufficient time and energy for almost unlimited activities, opened the Wellons' Female Seminary near Suffolk, with Miss Mary S. Patterson, Principal, and L. W. Goodwin, Professor of Music. The primary offerings during the five months session were English, Geography, Grammar, Arithmetic and Composition for \$10; Botany, Astronomy, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Rhetoric and Algebra for \$15; French for \$5; Drawing, Painting and Needle Work \$5 each; and Piano for \$15. Vocal music was taught gratuitously. Board, including washing, fuel and lights, was \$8 per month.⁶⁰

In 1853 the Esatern Virginia Christian Conference expressed the need for "a female school of high order to be under the control and management of the Christians in the bounds of this Conference,"

and planned to raise \$2,000 through the sale of \$25 shares in a joint stock company to found the institution.⁶¹ Holy Neck Female Seminary was the result of the project, and by 1857 fifty students were enrolled in its classes. In that same year the sponsoring Conference urged its membership to, "Let your children be educated in our denominational school, and let them drink deep of the fount of Christian liberty."⁶² As the records of the Eastern Virginia Christian Conference from 1860 through 1869 are missing, the only further knowledge of the seminary is that it was forced out of existence by the ravages of the War. The Wellons' school suffered a similar fate, and the educational program of the eastern Virginia Christians came to a temporary standstill.

After rejecting the offer to combine their interests with the North Carolina and Virginia body in sponsoring the school in Graham, the Eastern Virginians raised \$2,300 by the sale of stock at \$100 per share, \$50 per half share, and \$25 per quarter share to finance one of their own. The Conference was informed in 1871 by the Educational Committee that "a suitable house is now being erected" and the opening of the institution tentatively set for January 1872. The Suffolk Collegiate Institute, "Designed to give Students of BOTH SEXES, the best facilities for acquiring a thorough and practical education," opened its doors on schedule under the direction of William B. Wellons, president, Joseph King and John H. Wright, associate principals, with Mrs. Sarah B. Eley, teacher. Ministerial students N. B. Mumford, John T. Kitchen, J. Pressley Barrett and Harrison H. Butler were enrolled in the school, the latter three receiving financial support from the Conference to complete their education.⁶³

According to the report of the Educational Committee to the Eastern Virginia Conference in 1873, the total cost of founding the school had been \$4,338.75, of which \$3,080.25 had been collected, leaving an indebtedness of \$1,258.50. Sixty-five students were attending classes and the Committee felt, "The debt due on the Institution is as small or smaller than on any school of its character with which we are acquainted, and can be easily removed by a general co-operation."⁶⁴ Two years later the indebtedness had been reduced to \$810 and the student body had increased to ninety. Only approximately two-thirds of the institution's enrollment came from families connected with the Christian Church, as the school was conducted "entirely free from sectarian or denominational teaching or influence."⁶⁵

In 1877 C. A. Apple, who had formerly conducted a high school at Level Green, was elected president of the Institute to replace the deceased Wellons and, "The whole faculty of the school was then remodelled, greatly to its improvement, both as respects the culture of its members, and their capacity for successful and thorough instruc-

tion."⁶⁶ The new staff consisted of John H. Wright and Letitia P. Davis, assistants in the Literary Department, and William S. Williams in charge of the Music Department.⁶⁷ The withdrawal of Apple from the Christian Church the following year left the institution again without a leader and the Conference placed its affairs in the hands of the Committee on Education composed of J. Pressley Barrett, J. N. Manning, E. W. Beale, and J. T. Kitchen. In 1879 this committee reported:

With reference to the Suffolk Collegiate Institute, we bring cheering news. Since our last report when many considered the school dead, a revolution, so to speak, has taken place in regard to the workings of the school. Rev. E. W. Beale became its superintendent, while Profs. Kernodle and Kilby, Mrs. Quimby and Miss Colvin constitute the new faculty who are giving great satisfaction as teachers. At present there are 88 pupils in the school, and the prospects are considered good for 100 in January. Bro. John T. Nurney, a Deacon in the Suffolk Church, has been elected President of the Board of Trustees.⁶⁸

In 1881 the death of Edwin A. Beale deprived the Institute of his capable leadership. He was replaced by Peter J. Kernodle and Z. A. Post as associate principals.⁶⁹ This joint arrangement continued for several years after which Kernodle was placed in complete charge of the school. In 1886 the Southern Christian Convention approved funds for the establishment and financial support of a Theological Department in some college, and this project was awarded to Suffolk Collegiate Institute with P. J. Kernodle as principal and W. W. Staley as teacher.⁷⁰ Assisted by Mrs. Kernodle and a music teacher named Miss Harvey, the progress of the enterprise enabled the Committee on Education to report to the Eastern Virginia Conference in 1887:

The buildings and equipment of the "Suffolk Collegiate Institute" have been greatly enlarged and improved within the last year. The main building is forty-eight by ninety-six feet and three stories high, with double verandas and tower in front. It contains thirty rooms of good size, well furnished and adapted to their intended use. The means of ingress and egress are convenient and safe. Four halls from the four sides lead into the first floor, and three stairways lead from them to the second story. Two stairways lead to the third floor, and all these are substantially built. The males and females occupy distinct parts of the building with no means of communication except in Dining Hall, Assembly and recitation rooms, where they meet entering from opposite directions through different doors. In these the teachers are present.⁷¹

Under these encouraging circumstances the Institute continued its beneficial work as an educational unit of the Christian Church.

The following list contains the names of only a few of the students who attended Suffolk Collegiate Institute: Murdock Wellons

Butler, John T. Kitchen, Robert E. Barrett, Robert Anthony Ricks, William J. Laine, Harrison H. Butler, John U. Newman, Charles P. Norfleet, N. G. Newman, J. William Barret, Joseph T. Moore, John W. Patton, R. W. Gate, William Warner Moss, C. C. Peel, and J. Wallace Rawls. All of these were ministerial students, and quite a few of them received financial aid from the Eastern Virginia Conference in order to pursue their education. Several continued their studies further at universities, and the fact that they were able to do so is a testimony to the high quality of instruction they received at the Institute. In fact, the majority of the outstanding leadership of the Church for the next generation came from the alumni of the Institute and from Graham Normal College.

In 1850 the Christian General Meeting in session at Marion, Ohio, voted to found Antioch College at Yellow Springs, Ohio. The southern Christians were at that time still a part of the Christian Connection, and numerous articles appeared in the *Christian Sun* favorable to the enterprise. Under the presidential leadership of the nationally acclaimed Horace Mann, the doors were opened in 1852 of "the first college built by the Christians in America, and the first ever built extending equal privileges to both sexes."⁷² The institution was soon in financial straits, but Mann's Unitarian friends assisted it with funds, thereby gaining a voice in the operation of the college. Even this support failed to establish Antioch on a sound financial basis, and it alternately opened and closed several times within the next three decades.⁷³

In 1883 the southern Christian Church had already renewed fraternal relations with the American Christian Convention and took an interest in its activities, including the support of the Ohio College. Control had been restored to the Christians, who formed a Christian Education Society to be responsible for the financial affairs of the school, and the doors were again opened. Daniel A. Long, of Graham, North Carolina, served as president of the college from 1883 until 1899. His "services were effective, and in many respects brilliant,"⁷⁴ but disagreements within the Education Society so divided its membership that it finally abandoned its financial burden. The trustees then gave control of the enterprise to the Unitarians in return for their promise to endow the school. Litigation followed, and in 1894 the American Christian Convention withdrew its financial support until such time as the Christians could have equal representation with the Unitarians on the board of trustees. Without the support of his denomination, President Long's hands were virtually tied and he retired in 1899. "This was practically the last expiring hope of the Christians relative to Antioch,"⁷⁵ which is still in operation today but not as an institution of the Christian Church.

The southern Church was also indirectly interested in other educational institutions founded by the Christians in the North, and in 1894 the Southern Christian Convention endorsed and recommended not only Suffolk Collegiate Institute and Antioch College but Union Christian College at Merom, Indiana; Starkey Seminary, Edgetown, New York; Standfordville Biblical School, Standfordville, New York; Christian Correspondence College, Lewiston, Maine; and Franklinton Christian College, a school for blacks at Franklinton, North Carolina. The name of the school at Standfordville was changed to the Christian Biblical Institute, and under the efficient direction of Austin Craig, the first president, it became a school devoted entirely to theological training. In 1907 the Biblical Institute merged with Defiance College at Defiance, Ohio, which is a thriving institution today.⁷⁶ Individual southern Christians contributed substantially to Franklinton Christian College, but the American Christian Convention was financially responsible for the institution. The Christian Church in the South had no official connection with any of the schools in the North and West, and in 1887 its efforts to promote education were represented only by Graham Normal College and Suffolk Collegiate Institute.

Viewed in the light of late twentieth century affluence, the sums raised by the Eastern Virginia Conference and the North Carolina and Virginia Conferences seem ridiculously small, but economic conditions in the post-war South made even seemingly small sums difficult to obtain. Whitley's charges that the Christians were indifferent to education may have been partially correct, although his college training had been financed by the Eastern Virginia Conference; but there is no basis of fact for the conclusion that the Christian Church had completely ignored education or had never done anything about it. Numerically the denomination was small and its resources consequently limited, but the conferences persevered in their efforts until an institution sponsored by the entire Christian Church in the South appeared possible and desirable. As a result, they united their resources in 1887 and founded Elon College. Graham Normal College was merged into the new school when it began operations. The importance of Suffolk Collegiate Institute subsequently dwindled until it ceased to function as a denominational enterprise in 1896. Although both of these latter two schools ceased to exist, they merit a high degree of credit for the contribution both made to Christian education and for paving the way for a greater and more extensive effort on the part of the Christian Church to educate its ministers and its laity.

Footnotes

- ¹ William Allen Harper, "Education Among the Christians, South," *The Herald of Gospel Liberty*, August 29, 1918; also, O'Kelly, *Apology*, 29.
- ² *Conferences*, 60.
- ³ *Ibid*, 77.
- ⁴ *Ibid*, 172.
- ⁵ *Ibid*, 172.
- ⁶ *Annual* 1870, 21.
- ⁷ *Ibid*, 4, 31, 38.
- ⁸ *Annual* 1871, 64-67.
- ⁹ *Annual* 1874, 73.
- ¹⁰ *Annual* 1883, 38-40.
- ¹¹ *Annual* 1887, 21.
- ¹² *Annual* 1903, 29.
- ¹³ *Sun*, December 6, 1894.
- ¹⁴ *Annual* 1911, 24.
- ¹⁵ *Annual* 1913, 27.
- ¹⁶ *Annual* 1923, 43.
- ¹⁷ *Annual* 1897, 15.
- ¹⁸ *Annual* 1899, 26.
- ¹⁹ *Annual* 1901, 26; *Annual* 1903, 29.
- ²⁰ *Annual* 1913, 27; *Annual* 1923, 43.
- ²¹ The "String of Pearls" consisted of twelve small ornamented cards, each with a different shape, and each designated as the 12th chapter of Romans, the 13th chapter of First Corinthians, or some other appropriate scriptural passage. As each one was memorized, the card was given to the youth to be placed on a ribbon and hung on the wall. The completed "string" was ornamental and highly esteemed by its owner. (The source for the introductory statement of President Harper is the testimony of the author who was present. D.T.S.)
- ²² *Sun*, Vol. LXXV, May 31, 1923, No. 22, 2.
- ²³ Sallie W. Stockard, *History of Alamance*, (Raleigh, North Carolina: Capital Publishing Company, 1900), 156. Hereinafter cited as Stockard, *Alamance*. The reason for adding "New" to the name of Providence Meeting House is unknown. Possibly it was done when the church was rebuilt or the original church may have been located elsewhere. (John Anthony, who lived on Huffman Mill Road until his death on May 10, 1965, at the age of 99, insisted that Providence Meeting House was originally located behind his home on a site now occupied by one of the Kayser-Roth Hosiery Company plants. A cemetery on that site supports the possibility that a church had once been there. D.T.S.)
- ²⁴ William Holt Turrentine, "History of Christian Education in Alamance County," an unpublished manuscript, Church History Room. Hereinafter cited as *Turrentine Manuscript*.
- ²⁵ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 113.
- ²⁶ *Recorder*, February 5, 1836.
- ²⁷ *Palladium*, June 15, 1841.
- ²⁸ *Recorder*, August 15, 1839.
- ²⁹ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 228-229, 309; *Sun*, February 12, 1851.
- ³⁰ *Conferences*, 161.
- ³¹ *Ibid*, 171.
- ³² *Ibid*, 91.
- ³³ Alamance County Deeds Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Alamance County Courthouse, Graham, North Carolina, Deed Book I, 720. Hereinafter cited as Alamance Deeds.
- ³⁴ *Sun*, Vol. VIII, July 16, 1851, No. 13, 2.

- ³⁵ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 229, gives the location of Holt's school on North Main Street in Graham which has led to an incorrect supposition that this was also the site of Graham Institute. All of the successive deeds to the property which eventually became Graham College refer to the same tract of land on what is now the 300 block of South Maple Street. As the location of the College on Maple Street is a generally known fact, that site must also have been the location of the Institute.
- ³⁶ *Sun*, Vol. IX, June 2, 1852, No. 22, 3.
- ³⁷ *Conferences*, 185, 188.
- ³⁸ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 229; also, Wilbur Ernest MacClenny, "The Evolution of Elon College"; *Sun*, Vol. XCI, October 12, 1939, No. 41, 5.
- ³⁹ *Sun*, November 30, 1855; *Conferences*, 207. See also Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 210.
- ⁴⁰ *Conferences*, 129.
- ⁴¹ *Southern Convention*, 1856, 18.
- ⁴² *Sun*, May 15, 1858.
- ⁴³ *Ibid*, March 11, 1859; June 17, 1859.
- ⁴⁴ Alamance Deeds, Deed Book 4, 164. The deed names both the incorporators and the trustees. As Harden had sold the Church the lot on which to build the Institute in 1850, this larger tract of land must have been adjacent to the first tract rather than the land described in the deed as that "whereon Graham Institute now stands."
- ⁴⁵ *Conferences*, 119.
- ⁴⁶ *Sun*, July 9, 1958.
- ⁴⁷ *Minutes of the Thirty-Sixth Annual Session of the North Carolina Christian Conference, Held at Hanks Chapel, Chatham County, N. C., (Suffolk: Printed at the "Christian Sun" Office, 1862), 6.*
- ⁴⁸ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 330-331.
- ⁴⁹ Alamance Deeds, Deed Book 4, 165.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 528.
- ⁵¹ *Annual 1870*, 24-25.
- ⁵² *Ibid*, 7.
- ⁵³ Alamance Deeds, Deed Book 6, 213.
- ⁵⁴ *Annual 1873*, 68.
- ⁵⁵ Alamance Deeds, Deed Book 6, 215; *Annual 1874*, 53; *Annual 1878*, 69.
- ⁵⁶ *Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina Passed by the General Assembly at Its Session of 1881*, 776.
- ⁵⁷ Typescript of an interview between Mrs. Lawrence and William T. Scott, 1964, Church History Room. Mrs. Lawrence died in 1969 at the age of ninety-seven after having been for some years the oldest living alumna of Elon College.
- ⁵⁸ *Annual 1873*, 42; *Annual 1883*, 74; *Annual 1885*, 66, 69; *Turrentine Manuscript*; Stockard, *Alamance*, 87. See also *Annual 1884*, 62.
- ⁵⁹ Wilbur Ernest MacClenny, "The Evolution of Elon College"; *Sun*, October 12, 1939.
- ⁶⁰ *Sun*, June 2, 1852.
- ⁶¹ *Conferences*, 106. See also Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 256-257.
- ⁶² *Conferences*, 189.
- ⁶³ *Annual 1871*, 10-11, 78.
- ⁶⁴ *Annual 1873*, 15-16.
- ⁶⁵ *Annual 1875*, 12.
- ⁶⁶ *Annual 1877*, 16-18.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 53.
- ⁶⁸ *Annual 1879*, 40-41.
- ⁶⁹ *Annual 1881*, 14-15; also, Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 303. Z. A. Post is presumed to be the Zenas Alfonso Poste who became president of Franklinton Christian College in 1904, but this has not been authenticated.
- ⁷⁰ *Annual 1887*, 23-24.
- ⁷¹ *Annual 1888*, 41.
- ⁷² Nicholas Summerbell, *History of the Christian Church, From Its Establishment By Christ to A.D. 1871*, (Cincinnati: Published at the Office of the Christian Pulpit, Third Edition, 1873), 546.
- ⁷³ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 191-197.

- ⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 279; also, Bruton R. Clark, *The Distinctive College: Antioch, Reed & Swarthmore*, (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1970), 14-19.
- ⁷⁵ *Annual 1895*, 11; Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 163, 201, 281, 323-329. See also, Daniel A. Long, *Sketch of the Legal History of Antioch College*, (Dayton, Ohio: Press of the Christian Publishing Association, 1890).
- ⁷⁶ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 323-324, 327-330, 210-212, 319.

Chapter VII

Black Christians

During the ante bellum period in the South black Christians, enslaved or free, usually belonged to the same local churches as white Christians. A rare exception was the Afro-Christian Church at Providence, in Norfolk County, Virginia, dedicated June 4, 1854, with an entirely black congregation. As few statistics were compiled or preserved, the numerical size of the black Christian membership is unknown. The first of this group to become prominent in church affairs was Isaac Scott, ordained in August 1852 as the first black missionary of the Christian Church. The ceremony was performed in Raleigh, North Carolina, by Henry B. Hayes, Isaac N. Walter and Joseph B. Hinton, representing the North Carolina Christian Conference, and was attended by the state's governor, David S. Reid. Scott sailed from Norfolk in the same year and located at St. Paul's River, Monrovia, in the Republic of Liberia. Some years later Stith Allen Howell of Virginia went to Liberia as the second black missionary of the Christian Church.¹

After the War, churches were gradually organized for the specific use of blacks, "according to the polity and usage of the Christian denomination."² As these churches multiplied, the desirability for a conference to unite them was manifest. As a result, either in late 1866 or early 1867 the North Carolina Colored Christian Conference was organized in Raleigh, becoming "perhaps the first Conference of any denomination, composed wholly of colored persons, organized in the South after the close of the war and the emancipation of the colored race."³ W. B. Wellons, president of the General Christian Convention, H. B. Hayes and J. W. Wellons assisted in forming the organization, and William M. Hayes was elected its first president.

Twelve ministers and approximately twenty churches were included in the Conference.⁴

The event was reported to the General Christian Convention at its 1870 session in the following manner:

Rev. J. W. Wellons introduced the following preamble and resolutions:

Whereas, a Christian Conference of colored persons has been organized since our last session, in the State of North Carolina, under the fostering care of the North Carolina Conference though separate and distinct in its organization; and

Whereas, They look to the parent body for counsel, encouragement, and assistance of every sort; therefore,

1. *Resolved*, That, while the Colored Conferences do not ask or expect representation, by delegates of their own color, in this body, yet we do hereby pledge ourselves to give the Colored Christian Conference of North Carolina, as well as other similar Conferences hereafter to be organized, all the aid and encouragement in our power, in building up the cause of Christ among their own people.

2. *Resolved*, That we recommend the organization of other Colored Conferences, wherever a sufficient number of ministers and churches can be obtained; these Conferences to be looked after by superintendents appointed by the White Conferences nearest them, or in the bounds of which the Colored Conferences may be organized.

3. *Resolved*, That we advise our colored brethren to establish a school for the education of their ministers as soon as possible.

Rev. J. W. Wellons explained the resolutions, and gave a history of the Colored Conference in his State, of which he is one of the Superintendents.

Rev. Bros. C. A. Apple, J. N. Manning, W. S. Long, Isaac H. Coe, B. S. Batchelor, and others, spoke in favor of the preamble and resolutions, expressing the deepest sympathy for the unfortunate African race.⁵

The first name of the new organization was the Western Colored Christian Conference, but this was changed to the North Carolina Colored Christian Conference by 1870.⁶ The minutes for that year are the earliest known and are a record of a session held in Raleigh on the 20th to the 22nd of October. J. Jeffreys was elected president and H. G. Hayes, secretary. The following Standing Committees were appointed:

On Education—Samuel Foy (Fay), Wm. M. Hayes, B. Young, and Lewis McCullen.

On Home Missions—Norfleet White, P. Bullock, S. Foy, P. Faucett, T. Wilson and M. Watson.

On Sabbath Schools—R. Preddy, N. Horton, J. Mann, and T. Bullock.

On Temperance—E. Horton, R. Cook, and M. Watson. Wm. M. Hayes, J. Jeffreys and E. Horton were appointed the Executive Committee.⁷

The next Conference met on the 9th through the 11th of November, 1871, at Burchett's Chapel in Warren County, North Carolina. Eighteen ministers and twenty-one churches composed the membership at that time, and seven new churches were received at the session. William M. Hayes was elected president and John W. Burwell secretary. J. W. Wellons was present as a representative of his Conference. The outstanding accomplishment of the session was recorded as follows:

The propriety of establishing a High School at Franklinton was discussed at length, and Norfleet White, S. L. Long and Wm. M. Hayes appointed a committee to purchase a lot and take steps, at once, for the establishment of a school. Two hundred and fifty-four dollars was raised at once for the school.⁸

This was the initial step in a program to provide educational opportunities for black Christians, and its final result was Franklinton Christian College, at Franklinton, North Carolina.

There was also growing activity among black Christians in Virginia, as may be seen in the *Christian Annual* for 1871 which contains the following item:

Several colored churches have been organized in the bounds of the Eastern Virginia Conference. Rev. Justin Copeland, a colored minister, has charge of the churches at Mount Ararat and Zion, in Nansemond county, and Antioch, in Isle of Wight county. Lewis Darden and Talitha Briggs have been licensed to preach for their color, and Henry Hamlin, an intelligent colored man in Southampton county, is a candidate for licensure.⁹

Additional churches were being organized by W. B. Wellons, R. H. Holland, and S. S. Barrett. In 1872 the *Christian Annual* published a prediction that a conference would soon be organized to include the churches in Nansemond, Isle of Wight, Norfolk, Southampton, and Sussex Counties.¹⁰

The North Carolina Colored Conference received several new churches and licensed a number of ministers at its 1872 meeting in Graham, North Carolina. E. W. Beale and W. S. Long attended the meeting in an advisory capacity. An interesting item of business was a proposal from a colored Disciples Conference in eastern North Carolina for a merger, which "elicited much discussion."¹¹ Even though the proposition was not accepted, the Conference which met the following year at Christian Chapel in Wake County, North Carolina, welcomed a fraternal delegation from the eastern Conference "on the Christian platform."¹²

The 1873 Conference met at Christian Chapel, Wake County, North Carolina, and chose Brutus Young for its president and S. L. Long for secretary. J. W. Wellons, A. Apple and W. G. Clements were visitors at the meeting. A decision was made to assess the

church membership for funds needed to begin the operation of the Franklinton school. Then attention was concentrated on the encouraging growth of black Christian churches in an ever widening area, which made a second conference seem advisable. The final action was to change the name of the body in session to the Western North Carolina Conference and name the new organization the Eastern North Carolina Conference. The dividing line between the two was the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad. The names and addresses of the ministerial membership of the two Conferences were as follows:

W. M. Hayes, Raleigh
 Jackson Jeffreys, Raleigh
 John Smith, New Hill
 Joseph Adams, Morrisville
 R. I. Johnson, Raleigh
 John Kent, Apex
 Brutus Young, Ridgeway
 R. Preddy, Slopdown
 Samuel Foy, New Berne
 Alfred Pettyford, Plymouth
 Hanson Pool
 Exum Green
 J. R. Watson, Selma
 R. McKinsey, Bay River
 Joseph Mann, New Berne
 George Jones, Plymouth
 Frederick Respass
 L. McCullen, Durhamville, Tenn.
 Joseph Whitley, Pantego
 Oscar Hinton
 J. S. Harris, Raleigh
 Nash Horton, New Hill
 H. Hazel, Durhamville, Tenn.
 George Fisher, Murfreesboro
 Jesse Gurganus¹³

On December 11, 1873, the Virginia Christian Colored Conference was organized at Mt. Ararat, Nansemond County, Virginia, with the assistance of J. N. Manning, E. W. Beale and W. B. Wellons. Justin Copeland was the president and Elisha A. Copeland secretary. The membership was composed of six churches and the following ministers:

Justin Copeland, Holy Neck
 Jesse Jones, Norfolk
 Charles Anderson, Norfolk
 Jacob Sketer, Suffolk
 Lewis Darden, South Quay
 Henry Hamlin, Wakefield
 Talitha Briggs, Holy Neck
 Armstead Riddick, Gatesville, N. C.¹⁴

The three Conferences met in 1874, but few details are known about these sessions. The Virginia Conference met at Zion in Nansemond County, Virginia. The Western North Carolina body assembled at White Grove near Ridgeway, North Carolina, and the Eastern North Carolina Conference met at Spring Green Church in Washington County, North Carolina. At the latter meeting, "The Conference was divided by the introduction of the doctrine and practice of the Disciples among them. What the result of this division may be, is not at present known."¹⁵ At this time the three organizations numbered approximately forty ministers and sixty churches in their membership. The following year the Virginia Conference convened at Providence in Norfolk County, Virginia. In North Carolina the Eastern Conference met in New Bern, and the Western body held its meeting in Raleigh. The latter Conference delegated William Hazel to organize a conference of the black Christians in Tennessee, but the outcome of this assignment is unknown. Minutes have been found of a conference session at New Bern, North Carolina, in November 1877, but the exact name of the organization is not stated. Otherwise no records of the conferences have been found for the ensuing decade after 1875.¹⁶

At some time after 1875 the Western North Carolina Conference resumed its former name, the North Carolina Colored Christian Conference, and the seventeenth annual session was held at Children's Chapel in Graham, North Carolina, from the 11th through the 17th of November 1884. After the meeting was opened by Moses Fike, president of the previous session, George Washington Dunn was elected president. The Conference was efficiently organized with committees on Sabbath Schools, School Board, Education, Home Missions, Temperance, and Finance, in addition to an Executive Committee; and a considerable amount of business was transacted. The *Christian Ark*, published at Franklinton, North Carolina, was adopted "as the organ of the colored Christian Church in America,"¹⁷ and the organization of six new churches was reported. A special committee composed of H. E. Long of Franklinton, Mrs. Adora Byrd and Mrs. Lucy Fike of Raleigh, and Mrs. Rachel Wilson and Miss Cora V. Arcoltree of Graham, was appointed to submit a Constitution and Bylaws for a Ladies' Working Society. The plan devised by the committee called for the customary president, vice president, secretary-treasurer; they were empowered to appoint any necessary committees, and it was stated that the principal objective of the society was "to raise funds for the benevolent operation of the church in whatever direction they may be needed."¹⁸ The report was presented to the Conference with the following introduction:

As woman was first in transgression, so she, as though she would make amend for the wreck and ruin, she has made, is now willing to be first in the work of lifting up, and saving the fallen. She may not be able to move out in the more arduous labor, yet she is willing to do what she can.

One of the mistakes of the church has been that she has too long discarded the efforts of her female members, in their departments in which she can so well labor. But a better day is dawning, prejudice is wearing away, and all the energies of the church are now being used to press forward the work of the Master, the timid and retiring nature of the woman may prevent her from rushing to the front, in the great battle for God, and humanity, yet there are spheres where she can labor with more success than the man. In many of the benevolent operations of the church, woman can succeed where man would fail.¹⁹

The report was adopted and organized work had begun among the black Christian women.

The Committee on Finance reported an income of \$22.60 to be used for printing the Minutes and \$101.98 for the establishment of schools. The Committee on Education reported expenditures of \$25.00 with \$22.03 received, which left a deficit of \$2.97. The Conference Treasurer had received \$35.62 and paid out \$35.18, which left a balance on hand of 44¢.²⁰ These figures plainly reveal the financial stress under which the black Christians labored, yet they courageously continued to expand their activities, which included promoting a school at Franklinton, North Carolina.

In Virginia the Conference of blacks had changed its name to the Eastern Virginia Colored Christian Conference, and it met in October 1884. Jesse Jones was the president, F. E. Jordan secretary, and C. Morris the assistant secretary. Eight churches with a total membership of 1,088 composed the Conference. \$54.12 was the balance on hand in the treasury, and the churches were requested to raise \$52.05 during the coming year for a Missionary Fund. The Committee on Education reported:

As it is an age of improvement our people are improving as they grow up. The standard of education must be raised among the ministers of the gospel if possible. We should use our influence with young men looking forward to the ministry to improve themselves for the position of a minister, and help them when we can, that they may be useful in the cause of Christ, and in the elevation of the church.²¹

Evidently a Sunday School Convention had been organized in Virginia about the year 1876, as the eighth annual session of the Eastern Virginia Sunday School Convention was held at Laurel Hill, Nansemond County, July 25 and 26, 1884. Justin Copeland was chosen president and W. S. Howell secretary. There were active schools at

Laurel Hill, Providence, Zion, Chapel Grove, and Corinth Chapel, with a total of 205 scholars and 21 teachers.²²

Due to the increase in churches, by 1896 the following five conferences of the black Christians had been organized: North Carolina, Eastern Virginia, Eastern Atlantic (which replaced Eastern North Carolina), Cape Fear (which dissolved before 1912), and Georgia and Alabama, with a total membership of approximately 6,000. As a result of this growth and expansion, in May 1892 at the Watson Tabernacle in New Bern, North Carolina, the Afro-American Christian Convention was organized in which all of the black conferences were represented by delegates.²³ No records of the proceedings of any of these organizations have been found for the period between 1884 and 1895 when the North Carolina Conference convened from November 13th through 16th at Ebenezer Christian Church in Burlington, North Carolina. The officials were William Williams, president; H. E. Long, secretary; James A. Henderson, assistant secretary; and H. K. Kearney, treasurer. The Conference had been incorporated, and G. W. Dunn, Thomas Bullock, Clayton Cook, Sr., Jacob Onslow, N. White, H. E. Long, H. K. Kearney, and W. M. Nicholson were the trustees. Sixty-nine churches with a total membership of 3395, 33 ministers, and 18 licentiates composed the Conference. The total amount of collections for all purposes during the year was \$1,883.57.²⁴ In 1910 the Lincoln Conference was formed in North Carolina by a division of the North Carolina Christian Conference.²⁵

In 1908 the black Methodist Protestants, South, joined the Afro-Christian Convention, and the name of the latter was changed to the Afro-Union Christian Convention.²⁶ In 1916 the name had again been changed, and the Afro-Christian organization held its twenty-fifth session at Wesley Grove Christian Church at Newport News, Virginia, from June 20th through June 28th. S. A. Howell was president and J. E. Samuels, general executive secretary. Other officials were F. L. Taylor, vice president; C. A. Harris, recording secretary; J. W. Meadows, assistant secretary; J. E. Samuels, secretary of education and missions; W. S. Matthews, treasurer; Wesley Raney, financial secretary; A. A. Bright, field secretary for the Southern Division; and N. E. Higgs, field secretary for the Northern Division. The member-conferences in the South were North Carolina, Eastern Virginia, Eastern Atlantic North Carolina, Lincoln, North Carolina, and Virginia and Alabama. In the North there were the New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania Conferences. Other conferences were British Guiana in South America and the Barbados, Trinidad, and Jamaica Conferences in the British West Indies. General Field Secretary Samuels estimated the numerical strength of the black

Christians as 12,000 members and reported, "To include Sunday School scholars and Christian Endeavor members under 12 years of age will give us a total sum of near 30,000." This growth was reflected in his financial summary which gave the total money collected in two years as \$173,652. Added to \$144,607 which was given as the value of church property, the estimated total wealth of the Conference was \$318,259.²⁷ This was commendable progress for the black Christians.

The detailed reports of the various committees were discussed at length by the delegates. Included in the deliberations were a survey of the foreign mission work in the West Indies and South America, a plea for greater support for Home Missions, a proposal to raise funds to retire the indebtedness of Franklinton Christian College, a recommendation to make the *Missionary Herald* the official organ of the Convention, and an agreement to apply for membership in the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.²⁸ Statistical information from the member-conferences was reported to the Convention and recorded in the minutes.

An account was also given to the Convention of the activities of the Woman's National Home and Foreign Mission Convention, which had been organized in 1914 to "have the entire control of the women's work within the jurisdiction of the Afro-American Convention." The following officials administered the Convention's affairs in 1916:

Mrs. Rosa Howell, president
 Mrs. Mattie Mitchell, vice president
 Mrs. Sylvia Kinsey, second vice president
 Miss Bessie King, recording secretary
 Mrs. Violetta Squires, assistant secretary
 Mrs. Effie D. Samuels, corresponding secretary
 Mrs. Stella Parker, treasurer
 Mrs. Fannie Sumner, Mrs. Lillian Ellis, mite box superintendents
 Miss Corina Midgett, superintendent Young People's Work, Virginia
 Miss Zelphia Kinsey, superintendent Young People's Work, North Carolina
 Mrs. Fannie Fulcher, general field secretary

The active State Missionaries were Mrs. M. E. Harris, Eastern Virginia; Mrs. L. Fike, Central North Carolina; Mrs. E. Browning, Western North Carolina; and Mrs. F. L. Taylor, Eastern North Carolina. The District Missionaries were Mrs. Sarah Jeffres, Mrs. Emaline Richardson, and Mrs. Millie Trice. With committees for Credentials, Home Missions, Foreign Missions, Publication, Moral Reform, Young People's Work, Ways and Means, Finance, Education and Nominations, the work of the black Christian women was efficiently

organized and soundly directed. It grew in usefulness and importance to the Christian Church during the ensuing years.²⁹

Sunday or Sabbath Schools, Christian Endeavor, home and foreign missions, temperance promotion, education, concern for orphans and the aged, and publications were all a part of the program of the black Christians just as they were of the other Christian churches, and each program was developed to the fullest extent possible. The greatest problem was that of providing adequate educational facilities, just as it was elsewhere, but the blacks did not allow the difficulties attendant upon establishing a school to deter them in their efforts to found one.

Within a few years after the close of the Civil War, George Washington Dunn, pastor of the black Christian church at Franklinton, North Carolina, became actively concerned over educational opportunities for his people. His congregation, which was above the average in culture, included Sanford L. Long who was "deeply solicitous" for greater educational training for his six children than he could provide for them at home.³⁰ As a result of the combined efforts of these two men the North Carolina Colored Conference in 1871 resolved to establish a high school at Franklinton and appointed Norfleet White, S. L. Long and William M. Hayes to serve as a committee to purchase a lot and "take steps, at once, for the establishment of such a school."³¹ Two hundred and fifty-four dollars were raised to initiate the enterprise. The material resources failed to match the enthusiasm, however, and no immediate action was taken by the committee.

Sanford L. Long was able to provide such advantages for his six children "that his became one of the best educated negro families in the state."³² In 1878 Henry Edward Long, one of the sons, opened a private school in the Franklinton Christian Church. The tuition was twenty-five cents per pupil and the school was so well attended that it was necessary to employ an assistant the second year.³³ Worthy as this enterprise was, however, it failed to fill the need for a high school, and the Conference was unable to substantially supplement the insufficient funds already raised for the purpose. In 1879 the Eastern Virginia Christian Conference was struggling to maintain the Suffolk Collegiate Institute, and the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference had not been financially able to fund a successor to the defunct Graham College. The financial condition of the southern Christians had not sufficiently recovered from the post-war impoverishment for them to provide the necessary money for education of either whites or blacks. Financial assistance had to come from outside the South, and George W. Dunn began to search elsewhere for it.

Just at this time Dunn chanced upon a copy of a publication known as *The Golden Censer* [*Censor*] and was sufficiently inspired by its contents to write an impassioned plea to the editor, informing him of the needs of his people. William O. Cushing, a Christian minister in New York state, read the letter when it was published in *The Golden Censer* and forwarded a copy to the *Herald of Gospel Liberty*, in which the appeal was published on February 21, 1880. Dunn explained that he had formerly been a slave, "but now, thank God, we are sitting under our own vine and fig-tree, and can worship God according to our conscience." He had been "trying to preach" for five of his thirty years of age and belonged to the Christian Church.³⁴ He then decried the plight of the black Christians:

The Baptist people, white teachers came from the North, and have built up schools for the colored Baptists. The Methodist white people have come from the North and built up schools for the Methodists, and are teaching the colored people. So with other sects. Therefore they are ahead of us in education. There is not one neither North nor South has ever come to relieve us of this state of poverty and ignorance. Our inducements are by other denominations saying, Come and join us and deny your name and take ours and we will educate you. We sometimes are almost about to cry out like the trembling jailor and say what must we do to be saved. And again the Spirit of the Lord speaks like thunder, and tells us to stand still and see the salvation of God.³⁵

In conclusion, Dunn made a plea for assistance to the school at Franklinton and asserted that with such aid the black Christians could soon begin to improve and help themselves.

In March 1880 Dunn wrote to thank Editor T. M. McWhinney for publishing his first letter in the *Herald of Gospel Liberty* and for informing the North that there was a black Christian denomination in the South. He offered further justification for the aid he requested by summarizing the progress that had already been made:

When the Christian churches were organized in 1866, in North Carolina, there was not a member that could read the Bible. Since that time, by the help of God, we have grown rapidly in numbers. Now we have men in every church able to act as secretary. We now have a school going on at Franklinton, twenty-seven miles from Raleigh, with one hundred and seventy-five scholars in attendance, and the principal teacher belongs to our church.³⁶

Dunn also wrote that the black Christians were unable to supply their churches with sufficient hymn books, and as a result of this statement he received hymnals and periodicals from individuals, including one box of twenty-five from Canada. These gifts were distributed among the congregations and put to immediate use. T.

Graham of Big Falls in Alamance County, North Carolina, wrote that the members of his four churches were delighted with a copy of the *Herald of Gospel Liberty*, though only a few could read it. "Your kindness will never be forgotten," he said. "Our people will be able to do something for you in a few years."³⁷ Dunn's letters were also read with sympathetic interest by J. P. Watson, Secretary of Missions in the northern Church. Prompt action followed; contributions were received, and in October 1880 the Mission Board of the American Christian Convention dispatched George Young, a minister of the New York Eastern Conference, to become the principal of the Franklinton School, with H. E. Long as his assistant.³⁸

Upon his arrival in Franklinton, Principal Young encountered a situation which has been summarized as follows:

The white citizens distrusted his mission. At that period an exciting presidential election aroused the entire country, North and South, East and West. The white citizens of Franklinton, North Carolina, conceived the idea that he came among them more for political than philanthropic motives.

He soon learned (if he did not know if before) that money was a very essential element for the successful prosecution of a work such as he had undertaken. His students needed Bibles and text books. His ninety-five children were in a dilapidated building. They needed a schoolhouse and books suitable for instruction.³⁹

Jonathan E. Brush of New York, who made the appraisal just quoted, visited Franklinton on January 11, 1881, at the request of J. P. Watson who desired a full report on the school for presentation to the Christian Mission Board. The result of Brush's visit was a drive for funds "which received such a hearty response from both whites and blacks"⁴⁰ that a suitable school building was erected by 1882 and classes were no longer held in church. J. W. Wellons served efficiently as superintendent of the construction, and while doing so "convinced his neighbors that Professor Young's work was a commendable one and deserving of encouragement, rather than distrust."⁴¹ Evidence of the improved situation was the passage by the North Carolina and Virginia Conference in 1883 of a resolution introduced by D. A. Long:

WHEREAS, We believe that this Institution is doing a good work, in our midst, therefore, be it

Resolved, That we bid Brother Young and those who have inaugurated this enterprise, God speed in their good work.

Resolved, That we will co-operate with our brother in the education of our colored friends.⁴²

Under these encouraging circumstances the school was incorporated as Franklinton Literary and Theological Christian Institute. The

American Christian Convention had become its sponsor, and J. E. Brush became its soliciting agent.

The new home for the institution, appropriately named Brush Hall, contained a chapel and hall on the first floor, five rooms including a library on the second floor, and three living rooms for male students in the attic, but accommodations were sorely lacking for female boarding students and the teachers. Joseph F. Mitchell, although counselled to be patient by J. W. Wellons, "the great friend of ours in the extension of our Zion," nevertheless wrote the *Herald of Gospel Liberty* of his ambitions for expansions:

Oh, when will the time come when we will be situated like, or as well as, our brother Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians? We are satisfied to say, if we had the finance that some of our other brethren have we would make the greatest and swiftest progress of any evangelical church in the United States. Now to those that may read this we don't mean to exhibit impatience at all, but only our needs are so great and our anxieties are ever before us to do something to raise our people from their present condition. I have my people at heart. Why? Because the two great powers by which they are kept back are powers that work like leprosy. They can see them, they can feel them. But then they don't kill at once, but slowly and slowly, so our people are deceived thereby. These two powers are, as we have said before, ignorance and poverty. The one naturally holds the other.⁴³

Happily, in this hour of need Mrs. Emily Wilson of Philadelphia became interested in the school and financed the construction of a dormitory which was named Gaylord Hall in honor of her father, Henderson Gaylord. Mrs. Wilson also bequeathed \$4,000 of her estate to the institution, which fund later became the nucleus for an endowment.⁴⁴ The black Christians did not depend entirely on gifts, for they purchased a lot upon which they built a home for the president of the Institute and deeded the property to the American Christian Convention. Brush also employed Miss Belle Collum to visit five conferences, and her solicitations during one summer raised \$500, a respectable sum at the time. In 1886 the American Christian Convention, in session at New Bedford, Massachusetts, was informed that the Institute was valued at \$10,000 and owed nothing. Brush also reported:

Eleven ordained colored ministers, instructed in our theological class, are in the gospel field; fifteen others are preparing for the same kind of work, and over thirty young women are engaged as teachers, and the State Superintendent says they are classed among the best.⁴⁵

This represents a laudable achievement for eight years of operation.

The Convention then heard a hearty endorsement of the Brush report by T. M. McWhinney. "We believe, too, as a rule, that the legacy of our political and religious liberty is contingent upon Christian education," McWhinney asserted, and continued, "As we believe that the work of Franklinton, North Carolina, is heaven-ordained, so do we believe that our brethren, North and South, should stand by it with their sympathies, their prayers, and their names."⁴⁶ George W. Dunn was then invited both to sing and to address the assembly. He complied, and his musical solo inspired the delegates to take up a collection of \$156 for Franklinton School. Lack of time precluded the delivery of his address, but it was printed in the Minutes of the Convention and explained the need for educational assistance:

And while the colored children have just as much money spent on them per capita, as the white children, North Carolina has only one-tenth the money that Massachusetts has to reach a population nearly as large, and a territory seven times as large.

.....
The dimes and dollars collected by Bros. Watson, Brush, and others, to aid the brother in black, have set in motion forces for good, whose full influence will go on and on until the last wave strikes the distant shore.⁴⁷

Miss Belle Collum was then permitted to address the session, and she did so with an eloquent appeal:

For some time the negro question has been agitating the minds of public men, and even in private circles the vexed question of "what shall we do with the negro?" is often asked. To this inquiry there comes but one rational answer. Educate him. There is no need of wasting time or breath in discussing the right or wrong of slavery, or considering the policy of so soon entrusting to his hands the responsibility and power of the ballot. The fact is he is an American citizen, and as such now wields a potent influence in the affairs of this republic. In a country like our own, where the laws and those who make and execute them emanate from the common people, the safety of the nation depends upon the wisdom, not alone of rulers and lawmakers, but of the people at large, and every patriotic child of America should see to it that the means for the development of the negro be placed within his reach.⁴⁸

As a result of these impressive reports and addresses, the Convention removed the responsibility for Franklinton from the Mission Board and placed it under a Board of Control, which had authority to direct its affairs. This act also made the Convention fully responsible for the operation of the school.⁴⁹

In 1889 George Young retired from the presidency and was succeeded by Charles A. Beck of Pennsylvania for one year. The next

president was J. F. Ullery of Ohio, who also officiated for one year, and it was during his term that a new charter was issued by the North Carolina Legislature in which the name of the school was changed to Franklinton Christian College. N. Del McReynolds of Ohio accepted the presidential chair in 1891 and served until 1897 when he was succeeded by Zenas Alfonso Poste.⁵⁰ In 1900, in addition to the president, who taught Bible studies, philosophy and natural science, the faculty consisted of H. E. Long, Mrs. Nellie P. Poste, Lavinna Poste, Novella Hester, Lena T. Leeds, and Celia White. Studies included Bible, philosophy, natural science, music, English, mathematics, history, Latin, and instruction in kindergarten and primary work. The total number of students was one hundred sixty; these were aided in their studies by a library containing twenty-five hundred volumes.⁵¹

In 1902 the control of the college was removed from the Board of Control and placed under the Educational Board of the American Christian Convention, but in 1904 the Board of Control was re-established. It was composed at that time of John Blood, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania; J. L. Foster, Elon College, North Carolina; W. H. Hainer, Irvington, New Jersey; F. H. Peters, Coshocton, Ohio; and P. S. Sailor, Norfolk, Virginia. The following year the Board purchased eighty-three acres of land approximately one mile north of the school, and within a few years the institution was moved into brick buildings on the new location.⁵²

In 1904 H. E. Long became the president and served for thirteen years. F. S. Hendershot of Philadelphia followed for a three year term. In 1920 S. A. Howell of Newport News, Virginia, accepted the office and was succeeded in 1922 by J. A. Henderson of Townsville, North Carolina, who officiated until 1930. During Henderson's administration Franklinton reached the long-sought goal of accreditation as a standard school by the North Carolina Department of Certification. The college continued to grow and the faculty numbered eleven instructors for one hundred and four students during Howell's administration. With the exception of Long, Howell and Henderson, the presidents of Franklinton were white men, but after 1904 the faculty was almost entirely composed of black teachers.⁵³

In 1929 the Board of Control was composed of President Henderson, W. G. Sargent of Rhode Island, W. A. Harper and C. H. Rowland of North Carolina, and O. S. Thomas, A. W. Sparks and Mrs. Sadie K. Swartsel of Ohio. The Advisory Board included the president, S. A. Howell and C. Harris of Virginia, and W. S. Matthews, F. A. Hargett and A. A. Hazel of North Carolina.⁵⁴ The authorities concluded it was no longer practical to continue the operation of Franklinton as an independent college, and it closed its doors in 1930.

Shortly afterward the institution was merged with Bricks Junior College at Bricks, North Carolina, where a beneficial educational program is still in progress at the present time. Although there was no official connection between the college and the southern Christian Church until the latter joined the American Christian Convention in 1922, the Church heartily endorsed the school and numerous members individually made substantial contributions to its program.

For half a century Franklinton Christian College provided an educational opportunity that was paramount at the time. Had its founders not endured the struggles encountered in building and maintaining the school, many might never have been released from the shackles of illiteracy to prepare for a more useful Christian life. The productive careers of Franklinton's graduates have brought honor and credit to the institution, and these accomplishments have been sufficient reward for the sacrifices of the founders and sponsors. The college not only trained youth in the Christian way of life but served also as an asset to the clergy. Former president McReynolds recalled the decision of the Board of Control in 1894 to allow him to dispose of duplicate copies of books acquired by the library. As a result:

One pastor came twenty-five miles for a Bible dictionary. There were two in the library, and we sometimes needed both of them, but, realizing the need of the pastor, one copy was given to him and he went away rejoicing, literally hugging the book in his great joy . . . Rev. R. M. Hester, of Durham, one of the oldest ministers of the conference, being within eight miles of Franklinton, walked there to get a copy of "Summerbell's Christian Principles" to replace the one he had, but had loaned it till worn out. He obtained it and went on his way rejoicing.⁵⁵

Thus did Franklinton Christian College serve in various ways, and black Christians have every right to be justly proud of the institution's record.

Several periodicals were published by black Christians from time to time, but no surviving copies have been found and very few facts are known about them. One of the earliest was the *Christian Visitor*, published at Newport News, Virginia, during the 1890s.⁵⁶ The North Carolina Colored Christian Conference in its 1884 session voted "to adopt THE CHRISTIAN ARK as the organ of the colored Christian Church in America."⁵⁷ This paper had its editorial office in Franklinton, North Carolina, as did the *Christian Monitor*, which was in circulation at about the same time. In 1909 J. C. Core and J. H. McBroom were co-editors of *The Echo*, published at Graham, North Carolina, under the supervision of a board of directors. Shortly before this monthly periodical appeared, the *Union Christian Star* was founded at Henderson, North Carolina. In the same town J. A. Henderson issued a monthly paper, the name of which is unknown but

which became the "organ of the Afro-Christian Convention."⁵⁸ This Convention at its 1916 session adopted the *Missionary Herald* as its official organ, so this was presumably a different publication.⁵⁹ No further facts about these journals have been found.

On April 14, 1909, nine ministers and eight laymen met in Alamance County, North Carolina, and decided a new conference was needed. A charter of incorporation was obtained from the state, and on July 15, 1909, the Lincoln Colored Christian Conference was formally organized in the Christian Church at Cary, North Carolina.⁶⁰ In 1916 J. W. Meadows was president of the Lincoln Conference, Miss R. Headen secretary, and Mrs. Effie D. Samuels treasurer.⁶¹ The growth of the Conference was steady, and shortly after the Christian-Congregational merger in 1931 it included twenty ministers and twenty-three churches.⁶²

In 1925 the Eastern Virginia Christian Conference of blacks included forty-two churches and fifty-three ministers. Finding accommodations for a body of that size became increasingly difficult, and this problem prompted W. T. Faulk to move that the organization be divided into two sections. The motion was approved, and the Eastern Virginia Christian Conference was organized in October 1926 at Zion Christian Church near Lumis, Virginia.⁶³

A few years after the Afro-Christian Convention was founded it sent two missionaries to Liberia, but their efforts to establish a permanent mission failed. In 1909 the Convention deputed S. A. Howell of Newport News, Virginia, and N. E. Higgs of Durham, North Carolina, to organize a Christian mission in British Guiana. The interest in South America had been aroused by a plea from Joseph A. Johnson, a native of Albouystown, County of Demerar, in British Guiana. Howell recorded the results:

Upon application on the part of Mr. Johnson, and upon investigation on our part, we found the mission promising, and proceeded to explore the work thoroughly. As a result three churches were organized that year, 1909. Mr. Johnson was ordained and 5 preachers licensed. A West Indian Christian Church was organized in the Barbadoes Island. These churches were organized into the Demeraran Christian Conference, and added to the Afro-Christian Convention.⁶⁴

In 1916 Johnson reported 4 churches, 50 members of the Women's Home Mission, 113 members of Christian Endeavor Societies, and a total membership of 945. The Christian work in South America continued to grow until Johnson's death in 1928 closed the mission.⁶⁵

On October 23, 1929, Charles A. Harris, president of the Afro-Christian Convention, made the following report to the General Convention of the Christian Church:

The Afro-Christian Convention has in its bounds nine conferences, namely: Western N. C. Conference, with 39 Churches and missions, 42 elders, 13 licentiates, President Rev. J. A. Henderson; Eastern Virginia Conference, with 23 Churches and missions, 40 elders, 22 licentiates, President Rev. S. A. Howell, D. D.; Eastern Atlantic Conference, with 18 Churches and missions, 20 elders, 3 licentiates, President Rev. F. A. Hargett; West Virginia Conference, with 23 Churches and missions, 16 elders, 2 licentiates, Rev. G. T. Hall, president; S.D.N. Conference, with 21 Churches and missions, 27 elders, 5 licentiates, Rev. D. C. Goodson, president; Lincoln N. C. Conference, with 22 Churches and missions, 16 elders, 8 licentiates, President Rev. S. W. Albright; N. Y., Phila. & N. J. Conference, with 10 Churches and missions, 8 elders, 3 licentiates, Rev. R. B. Brodie, president; Demarar Conference, S. A. (missionary), with 6 Churches and missions, President the late Rev. J. A. Johnson.⁶⁶

The totals amounted to 170 elders, 60 licentiates, 165 churches and missions, with a membership of about 40,000, with a working force of 30,000, "and every department is alive and at work." This admirable record was accomplished by the devotion, work and sacrifice of the black Christians for their Church and is a foundation upon which they are still successfully building.

More than a year previous to the session of the General Convention at Piqua, Ohio, which accepted the Plan for merging with the Congregational Church, and where Harris made his report, the Afro-Christian Convention had unanimously resolved to approve the union.⁶⁷ An incomplete list of the member-conference officials in 1931 included the following:

North Carolina Christian Conference—J. A. Henderson, president; A. J. Holloway, vice president; J. W. Meadows, secretary; P. R. Alexander, assistant secretary; and J. E. Pearson, treasurer.

Eastern Atlantic Christian Conference—F. A. Hargett, president; D. H. Sparrow, vice president; J. H. Milteer, secretary; and J. F. Squires, treasurer.

Lincoln Christian Conference—S. W. Albright, president; K. S. Allen, vice president; J. W. Albright, secretary; and O. A. Hazel, treasurer.

North Carolina, Southern Division—Joseph D. Hill, president; B. J. Williams, vice president; Squire Dowd, secretary; F. C. Watson, assistant secretary; and William Whitaker, treasurer.

Virginia, Western—J. D. Farrar, president; R. R. Briggs, vice president; C. A. Harris, financial secretary; J. J. Faulk, secretary; W. T. Faulk, treasurer; and J. B. Jones, church extension treasurer.⁶⁸

After the 1931 merger, the Convention of the South was organized in 1950, including all the black former Christian churches and most of the black former Congregational churches and the Afro-Christian Convention gradually merged into the new denominational

organizations. J. Taylor Stanley of Greensboro, North Carolina, served as Superintendent and Registrar of this Convention until it was disbanded in 1965 when its function was merged with the general organization of the United Church of Christ. The member-conferences of the Convention were Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and New York. In 1960 the membership totalled 23,721, with church property valued at \$4,004,000, served by 199 ministers.⁶⁹ After the 1931 merger, the work of the black Christians continued to progress, constituting an important part of the Congregational Christian Church program. This advancement has continued in the United Church of Christ, and its future potential is almost unlimited.

Footnotes

- ¹ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 252. The given name, Seth, is incorrect.
- ² *Ibid*, 270.
- ³ *Ibid*, 270. The organizational date given is 1867 while *Annual 1874*, 67, gives 1866. It is possible that the meeting took place on the days when the years changed, but neither date can be substantiated as the exact year of organization.
- ⁴ *Convention 1866, 1867 and 1870*, 39; *Annual 1874*, 67.
- ⁵ *Convention 1866, 1867 and 1870*, 26-27.
- ⁶ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 270.
- ⁷ *Annual 1870*, 41.
- ⁸ *Annual 1871*, 63.
- ⁹ *Ibid*, 63.
- ¹⁰ *Annual 1872*, 50.
- ¹¹ *Ibid*, 50.
- ¹² *Annual 1873*, 54-55.
- ¹³ *Ibid*, 55.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid*, 55.
- ¹⁵ *Annual 1874*, 67.
- ¹⁶ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 270. For the 1877 conference minutes see *Proceedings and Biennial Journal of the Semi-Centennial (Twenty-fifth Session) Biennial General Convention of the Afro-Christian Church of the United States of America, Canada, South America and the West Indies Held In Wesley Grove Christian Church Nineteenth Street Newport News, Va.*, (Franklinton, North Carolina: Published by the Afro-Christian Publishing Association, 1916), 102-104. Hereinafter cited as *Afro-Christian Proceedings*, 1916.
- ¹⁷ *Minutes of the North Carolina and the Eastern Virginia Colored Christian Conferences, and the Eastern Virginia Sunday School Convention, for 1884*, (Raleigh, North Carolina: Sun Job Printing House, 1885), 2, 8. Hereinafter cited as *Conferences 1884*.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid*, 10.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*, 10.
- ²⁰ *Ibid*, 11-13.
- ²¹ *Ibid*, 19-23.
- ²² *Ibid*, 26-29.
- ²³ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 270-271.
- ²⁴ *Proceedings of the Twenty Eighth Annual Session of the North Carolina Christian Conference held at Burlington, N. C., November 13-16, 1895*, (Franklinton, North Carolina: Franklinton Printing Company, 1895), 1-30. Hereinafter cited as *Conference 1895*.
- ²⁵ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 271.
- ²⁶ *Ibid*, 343-344.
- ²⁷ *Afro-Christian Proceedings*, 1916, 7, 9, 73.
- ²⁸ *Ibid*, 80-85.
- ²⁹ *Ibid*, 90-95.
- ³⁰ *Herald*, December 20, 1900.
- ³¹ *Annual 1871*, 63.
- ³² *Herald*, December 20, 1900.
- ³³ *Ibid*.
- ³⁴ *Ibid*, February 21, 1880. *The Golden Censer* was the title used for two hymnbooks and one book of religious devotions, but *The Golden Censor* to which Dunn wrote was evidently a periodical about which no further trace has been found.

- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, March 13, 1880.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, November 30, 1882; July 3, 1880.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, December 20, 1900.
- ³⁹ *The Quadrennial Book—1886—of the American Christian Convention: Compiled by the Secretary, J. J. Summerbell, Under the Authority of the Executive Board*, (Dayton, Ohio: Christian Publishing Association, 1886), 143. Hereinafter cited as *Quadrennial 1886*.
- ⁴⁰ *Herald*, December 20, 1900.
- ⁴¹ *Quadrennial 1886*, 143.
- ⁴² *Annual 1883*, 80.
- ⁴³ *Herald*, October 19, 1882.
- ⁴⁴ *Quadrennial 1886*, 143-144; Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 285. See also J. Presley Barrett, *The Centennial of Religious Journalism*, (Dayton, Ohio: Christian Publishing Association, 1908), 555-558. Hereinafter cited as Barrett, *Religious Journalism*.
- ⁴⁵ *Quadrennial 1886*, 144.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 145.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 145-146.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 144.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁰ Barrett, *Religious Journalism*, 559; H. M. Stoddard, (ed.), *The Christians' Annual*, (Dayton, Ohio: Christian Publishing Association, 1899), 163.
- ⁵¹ *Catalogue of Franklinton Christian College, Franklinton, North Carolina*, (Naples, New York: Campbell and Morey, 1899), 2, 4, 16.
- ⁵² Barrett, *Religious Journalism*, 559.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, 559. See also *Catalogue of Franklinton Christian College*, (Henderson, North Carolina: The Rouse Printery, 1927), 2.
- ⁵⁴ *Annual Catalogue Franklinton Christian College 1929-1930*, (Franklinton, North Carolina: Privately Printed, 1929), 4-5.
- ⁵⁵ Barrett, *Religious Journalism*, 561.
- ⁵⁶ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 343.
- ⁵⁷ *Conference 1895*, 2.
- ⁵⁸ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 343.
- ⁵⁹ *Afro-Christian Proceedings*, 1916, 81. The *Missionary Herald* was published at that time by the Mission Board of the Congregational Church, Boston, and first issued in 1805.
- ⁶⁰ William Matthew Lake, "A Study of the Christian Denominations," a thesis for the Bachelor of Divinity degree submitted to the faculty of Shaw University, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1936. Typescript in the Church History Room, 30-31. Hereinafter cited as Lake, *Study*.
- ⁶¹ *Afro-Christian Proceedings*, 1916, 9.
- ⁶² Lake, *Study*, 33.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, 34-35.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 37. The passage from Howell's notebook was obtained from James Oscar Atkinson, Secretary of the Mission Board of the Southern Convention of Congregational-Christian Churches. The notebook was not among the Atkinson Papers placed in the Church History Room after Atkinson's death in 1940. See also Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 344.
- ⁶⁵ Lake, *Study*, 38.
- ⁶⁶ *Sun*, October 31, 1929.
- ⁶⁷ James Oscar Atkinson, "Let Us Get Acquainted," typescript in the Atkinson Papers, Church History Room, composed from data in the office of the Secretary of the Mission Board.
- ⁶⁸ *Year-Book of the Congregational and Christian Church*, 1931, (Privately Printed, 1931), 72-73.
- ⁶⁹ *Year Book of the Congregational Christian Churches of the United States of America*, 1960, (New York: General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches, 1960), 16, 59-64.

Chapter VIII

Elon College

Realization dawned on the southern Christians tardily but with certainty that the two schools at Suffolk and Graham could not accommodate the increasing educational needs of their membership. An institution backed by the concentrated effort of the entire denomination was the answer and the proponents of that goal exerted their efforts to obtain it. In 1882 the Southern Christian Convention met at Morrisville, North Carolina, where its Committee on Schools and Colleges introduced the following recommendation:

That this Convention proceed at once to establish a College at some suitable point within our borders, at which our boys and girls and our young men seeking to enter the ministry may be educated.¹

This statement prefaced a detailed plan for financing and operating the enterprise by a joint stock company instead of the Church as a whole; and, although the Convention approved it, sufficient stock was never sold to launch the undertaking. It was fortunate for the Christians that this project became a fiasco as the plan was comparable to the one which had proved impractical in the founding of Antioch College.² The failure also proved that if a denominational college was to become a reality it would have to be created by the Convention and not by individuals.

The matter was again brought before the Convention when it met in 1886 at Mount Auburn in Warren County, North Carolina. Some progress was made when the delegates agreed to establish a theological department in one of the existing schools, but this did not fulfill the need for a college sponsored by the entire Church.³ However, the Committee on Schools and Colleges was sufficiently en-

couraged by the Convention's action that it determined to pursue the matter further on its own initiative. W. S. Long, J. W. Holt and J. P. Barrett, ministers, with F. O. Moring and J. W. Harden, laymen, composed the Committee, and J. U. Newman met with it by request. This group immediately became so active that a special session of the Convention was deemed necessary in September 1888 to be informed of its progress.⁴

The Extraordinary Session met at New Providence in Graham, North Carolina, and heard the following report:

Your Committee on Schools and Colleges submit the following:

We held our first meeting March 28th, 1887, in the town of Graham. The propriety and importance of our establishing a denominational college was introduced and discussed, and at subsequent meetings held in Graham, May 23, 1887, and June 10, 1887, we leased the Graham Normal College property on terms which we deemed very reasonable.

We then elected Rev. W. S. Long, President, with Rev. J. U. Newman, Capt. S. A. Hollman [Holleman], Prof. H. J. Stockard, with such other teachers as they may deem necessary to do the work of the College, giving the Faculty the responsibility of the discipline of the School, reserving the right to advise with them on questions demanding our co-operation.

The results of this effort are known to the Convention. The prospects of the College are hopeful, only we are in great need of new buildings and more room.

At a meeting held July 3, 1888, we authorized the chairman to visit various points to investigate the advantages and ascertain inducements offered for the location of the College. We agreed to pay his actual travelling expenses while thus engaged.

1. We therefore ask the Convention to determine upon the place of permanent location, and to take such other steps as may be deemed proper in order to establish upon a permanent bases [sic] an Institution of high grade for the purpose of promoting education, morality and religion.

2. We recommend that this Convention elect fifteen Trustees to take charge of the enterprise, and that the entire control and management of the College, the property it may acquire, and its business affairs, shall be entrusted to and exercised by said Board of Trustees. For the guidance of said Trustees, and for the purpose of setting the work in order, we submit a Constitution and By-Laws, subject to revision and modification as therein provided.⁵

The institution was to be known as Graham College until a permanent name could be selected. The report also contained a constitution for the guidance of the new school. The proposals of the Committee were accepted and the die was cast: the southern Christian Church was to have its own college.

Without further delay trustees were appointed for the new school. Four of the men named to the two-year term were residents of North

Carolina: E. A. Moffitt, Asheboro; J. M. Smith, Milton; J. H. Harden, Big Falls; and F. O. Moring, Raleigh. The fifth was S. R. Read of Palmer Springs, Virginia. The trustees for the four-year term were all from Virginia: E. T. Pearce, News Ferry; W. J. Lee, Norfolk; J. W. West, Waverly; and P. J. Kernodle and E. E. Holland, both of Suffolk. For the six-year term three were from North Carolina: J. W. Wellons, Franklinton; W. S. Long, Graham; and G. S. Watson, Union Ridge; with two from Virginia: W. W. Staley, Suffolk; and M. L. Hurley, Franklin. All trustees elected after this date were to serve six-year terms. A Provisional Board was then elected to carry out the college work. W. S. Long was president; J. P. Barrett, secretary; F. O. Moring, treasurer; and J. H. Harden and G. S. Watson, members.⁶

After the organizational details had been completed, the Convention heard offers from various North Carolina municipalities for the location of the college. Two men named Caldwell and Hagan presented an offer of 40 acres of land or \$2500 in cash on behalf of Greensboro, while another man named Summers offered 40 acres plus \$4400 for Gibsonville. Jacob A. Long represented Graham with \$2750 offered unconditionally, with an additional \$250 if the school remained where it was located. James A. Turrentine presented Burlington's offer of \$5260. The decision of the Convention was to empower the Provisional Board to consider all the possibilities and then choose the location.⁷ The wisdom of the Convention's action was soon apparent as the problem increased in complexity with the presentation of additional propositions. These included 50 acres of land from J. H. Moring for Morrisville, North Carolina, and 50 acres from William H. Trollinger at Mill Point in the same state. Small wonder W. S. Long exclaimed, "Who next?"⁸

The Provisional Board, through its agent W. S. Long, investigated all of the generous invitations from the localities in the North Carolina Piedmont before reaching a decision to build the college in an area adjacent to Graham near New Providence Church. The *Christian Sun* announced the selection of a site on November 1, 1888, adding an approving "Hurrah for the College!"⁹ to the news item. Shortly afterward the Board was informed that a clear title to a part of the necessary land could not be obtained and decided to abandon its plans for a Graham location. The Board then met on December 20, 1888, and planned to locate the institution at Mill Point, a freight stop on the North Carolina Division of the Richmond & Danville Railroad (today the Southern Railroad), a few miles west of Graham and Burlington and approximately eighteen miles east of Greensboro. "Here we get control of the land on both sides of the railroad, and along the road below and above the depot for one half miles each way," wrote Agent Long. "We

will reserve the land needed for College purposes and lay out the balance in regular order for a village, and will give every fourth lot to any suitable person who will build a good house on it."¹⁰

In January 1889 the editor of the *Christian Sun* made an overnight visit to Mill Point and penned the following description of the site:

The place is already changed, it presents a busy scene. We judge there are about twenty men at work cutting and surveying. Rev. A. F. Iseley is also spot superintending the cutting out of the grove.

So far they have thirty-three kinds of trees growing. They are as follows: white, red, black, Spanish, pin, and post oaks, hickory, dogwood, pine (two kinds), cedar, holly, black and sweetgum, blackjack, Chinquepin, poplar, silver maple, elm, hackberry, wild grape, muskadine, persimmon, haw (two kinds), sarvis, sasafra, mulberry, walnut, willow, ironwood, ash, and locust. We name these only to indicate to our readers the character of the forest, and to show its great variety.¹¹

Little wonder from this account that "Elon," the Hebrew word for oak, was selected as the name of the college and eventually for the town. The identity of the individual who suggested the name is unknown. Tradition generally credits J. U. Newman with the idea, although one account gives it to Peter J. Kernodle.¹² It is interesting to note that sixty-eight years later Elon's President Danieleley, the great-great grandson of Alfred F. Iseley, superintended the replanting of trees on the same campus.

In the same month of the editor's visit W. S. Long, the elected president of the college, announced that the principal streets were planned to be one hundred feet wide and the remainder, eighty feet. "There will be trees in every street and on every lot," he stated. "Fifteen persons have indicated their purpose to build near the college."¹³ By April of the same year the avenues (none were to be called streets) had been given the commemorative names of O'Kelly, Haggard, Lebanon, Wellons, Kerr, Iseley, Manning, Beale, Summerbell, Barrett, Lee, Berea, and Antioch. Trollinger was named to honor W. H. Trollinger, the donor of the land for the college, and Williamson as a tribute to James N. Williamson, "who, though, not a member of the Christian Church, has given the largest single cash donation to the enterprise."¹⁴

In January 1889 President Long advertised for bids to supply 500,000 bricks as quickly as possible, and the contract was later awarded to William H. Trollinger.¹⁵ In the same year the General Assembly of North Carolina issued a charter for the college on March 11th, and on May 6th the first shovelful of dirt was dug for the foundation by the president. On May 20th the youngest Long daughter, Lizzie Jane, who later became Mrs. Albert Franklin, laid the first brick.¹⁶

Construction then proceeded rapidly on the main building which was 104 feet in length and 54 feet in depth. The structure was surmounted by an octagonal tower of 25 by 25 feet, which rose to the height of an additional story above the building's general height of 45 feet. There was a gable on each side of the tower.¹⁷ The contractor, John W. Long, made sufficient progress for the cornerstone to be laid on July 18, 1889, under the supervision of the Masonic Order. John M. Morning of Pittsboro, North Carolina, was the principal orator for the happy occasion and was accompanied by his daughter, Alberta, who later became a member of the Elon faculty.¹⁸

The construction of college buildings has rarely been easily accomplished and the building of Elon proved to be no exception. Despite the progress that was made, the money was paid in too slowly and in insufficient amounts to meet the rapidly increasing expenses. The sum of \$4,000 had been donated by the generous citizens in the area where the school was being built. J. P. Bland of Pittsboro, North Carolina, made the first cash gift, while President Long made the first subscription. The Berea Christian Church in Nansemond County, Virginia, conducted the first public appeal for funds and raised \$636.05. Willis Lee, a member of the congregation and a trustee of the college from its founding until his death, contributed \$250 of the sum.¹⁹ Many others were equally generous, but more money was always needed. No tribute can be too great for the men and women who raised funds, borrowed money, endorsed notes and contributed manually to the building of the school. President Long not only sold his farm to assist the project but carried boards for the carpenters who were at work on the buildings. He lived with his family in a three-room cottage, one room of which was used to feed the workmen. The completion of the college was the goal for which all personal conveniences had to be sacrificed. In Long's own words, "No language can fully and adequately portray the powerful solicitude, the sacrifices, and mental agony of some of those who led in this movement,"²⁰ but who depended on the success of the enterprise for their reward. The president also had to conduct campaigns to raise funds all during the construction period. On May 26, 1889, the *Christian Sun* published the following plea:

The Provisional Board of Elon College is arranging to put up Building No. 2, which will be used exclusively for girls' boarding hall and dormitories. Let the agent be encouraged if at all possible in his collections, for money is needed, and money must be had to keep this great work of the Church going forward. Wake up, brethren, and do your part and do it nobly.²¹

Construction continued into the year 1890, progressing as rapidly as available funds permitted. In May of that year the trustees pro-

vided some assistance for the zealous president by appointing W. T. Herndon to serve as canvassing agent and F. O. Moring as treasurer. "If all will do their duty when Dr. Herndon visits the churches," reads the account of the trustees' meeting, "the Christian Church will soon stand in respectable rank among her sister denominations in educational work."²² J. U. Newman and J. O. Atkinson were elected to assist Long as faculty members, with plans made to acquire additional instructors at a later date. The desired goal proved to be impossible to reach by the scheduled time but, though many temporary arrangements had to be made because the buildings were incomplete, Elon College opened its doors on September 2, 1890. Seventy-six students were immediately enrolled, and others arrived before the fourteenth day of the month, when work in the classrooms began.²³

During the period of construction at Elon, the Christian Church operated Graham College on the property leased from the Longs in 1887. Future intentions for the institution were clarified by a statement made by W. S. Long in 1889. "After Graham College is removed to its new location," announced Long, " 'Graham Normal College' will be kept up as an undenominational high school, just as it was before the College was established."²⁴ Exactly how these plans were to be carried out was not specified, and no explanation proved to be necessary, for the educational plant was destroyed by fire in 1892. The decision was made that rebuilding was impractical, and Graham Normal College thus passed out of existence. Had the Christian Church been financially able to restore and operate the high school in addition to Elon College, the enterprise would have been a highly valuable contribution to education; but the denomination had its hands full in the attempt to complete its college, and a high school had to wait until government funds were available for building.

In 1890 the estimated cost of Elon College was \$16,000, of which sum \$8,583.94 remained to be raised. During that year construction progressed to an advanced stage on the East Dormitory to house women, and the Main or Administration Building was completed. The latter contained thirteen classrooms, a chapel, a library, a reading room, an office, five music rooms, two society halls, a museum, six dormitory rooms, and the tower observatory. Each room was equipped with a fireplace and a flue for a stove, while ample space was available in the basement for a furnace should central heating ever be installed. Illumination was by lamps, although hope was expressed that electric lights and other conveniences could soon be added to "make Elon College the joy and pride of our people, a great center of influence, a blessing to humanity and a glory to God."²⁵

When the college opened, dormitory facilities were available for only a few men in the Administration Building, but the male students

who could not be accommodated on the campus and all of the female students obtained rooms in the village, which was growing faster than the school. Houses were erected for the college personnel, and several families built homes at Elon in order more conveniently to send their children to the institution. Numerous business establishments began operations to serve the residents, and a passenger station was built for the railroad patrons. On April 7, 1893, the Town of Elon College received its charter of incorporation from the State and organized its own governmental body.²⁶

In 1895 the College Catalogue contained the following list of annual expenses for students:

For young men, including tuition, board, room-rent, fees and washing.

Academic, first year	\$100.00 to \$125.00
Academic, second and third years	\$110.00 to \$135.00
College classes	\$120.00 to \$145.00

For girls, including tuition, board, furnished rooms, fuel, lights, servant's attendance, and washing.

Academic, first year	\$145.00
Academic, second and third year	\$155.00
College classes	\$165.00
Music and Art extra.	

Young men who roomed in the dormitory were required to supply their own furniture, fuel, lights, and bedding. The difference in the purchasing power of money at the time, as compared with today, is evident in the statement that a cord of wood, cut for use, could be obtained for \$1.50; washing for 50c to \$1.00 per month; and table board from \$4.50 to \$7.50 per month.²⁷

President Long firmly believed that coeducation was "the Divine plan" for, "It meets all the questions growing out of economy, morals, and manners, as no other system has done, [and] will for this reason win universal adoption." Although there were objections voiced against the policy during the early years of the college, Long informed the Southern Christian Convention in 1894 that prejudice was subsiding because "The moral and religious tone of the student body is of high order and impresses all who visit the College." He further reported:

Since the opening 257 students have matriculated.

Males	157
Females	100
From N. C.	180
From Va.	76
From S. C.	1
Graduates	14 ²⁸

The value of the physical plant of the college was estimated at \$50,675, which represented admirable progress, but much remained to be accomplished, and the Christian Church continued the building of its college.

Elon's faculty in 1891 was composed of President Long, A.M., D.D., who was Professor of Biblical Instruction, Natural and Social Science; J. U. Newman, Ph.D., Professor of Greek and Higher Mathematics; J. O. Atkinson, Professor of Latin, Mental and Moral Science; Emmett Leonidas Moffitt, Professor of English and Modern Languages; while S. A. Holleman was principal of the Academic Department. Misses Maud Robbins and Lorena Long taught vocal and instrumental Music, while Miss Alberta Moring gave lessons in Painting and Drawing.²⁹ Within two years both James Oscar Atkinson and Moffitt were granted leave to attend Harvard University for further graduate degree studies. During the same period the faculty was enlarged to include R. G. Kendrick, A.M., Latin and German; Herbert Scholz, A.B., English and Political Science; S. J. Durham, A.B., English, Political Science and German; and Miss M. Irene Johnson, A.B., Mathematics and French. In Music, Janie Price of the Cincinnati Conservatory, Miss Emma Harward of the Boston Conservatory, and Miss Chatty Cushman of the Leipsic Conservatory, served as teachers. In 1892 Miss Almira Johnson was appointed Matron and George W. Kernodle, M.D., became the college physician. In 1897 the college offered courses in the following subjects: Greek, Latin, French, English, General and Applied Mathematics, Modern Languages, Philosophy, Bible Study, Political Science, Social Science (sociology), History, Music, Fine Arts, Elocution, Physical Culture and Natural Science, which included Physiology, Biology, Geology, Physics, Astronomy and Chemistry.³⁰

Elon students followed the prevailing custom of the day shortly after the college opened by organizing three literary societies, the Philologian and Clio for the men and the Psiphelian for the women. The societies were provided with commodious halls for their weekly meetings on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings when compositions were read, speeches were delivered, and parliamentary law studied.³¹ Practically every student belonged to one of the organizations, and a friendly rivalry developed between the groups. The societies were such an important part of the social and intellectual life on the campus that the college Year Book, inaugurated in 1913 and published annually since, was named the *PhiPsiCli*, thus equally honoring each organization. With the emergence of social fraternities and sororities at the college, interest in the societies began to wane and they were disbanded about 1933 after three decades of useful existence.

At the close of the academic year in 1894 W. S. Long resigned the presidency to become Superintendent of Public Instruction for Alamance County. His herculean efforts had accomplished a great deal, but much more remained to be done in order for Elon to become the fully equipped school needed by the Christians. William W. Staley, then pastor of the Christian Church in Suffolk, Virginia, was elected to the presidency and accepted the office on the condition that he serve as a non-resident executive. Under this condition he made monthly visits to the school where J. U. Newman, dean for nine years, and J. O. Atkinson, dean for two years, took care of the daily duties at the institution. Walton Crump Wicker, Professor of Mathematics and Philosophy; Walter Phalti Lawrence, Professor of English Language and Literature; and Peter J. Kernodle, Professor of Mathematics; were added to the faculty during this period. Finances also improved during the eleven years of the Staley administration, largely because the Southern Christian Convention in its biennial session at Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1898 voted an annual appropriation of \$1800 for the college. In 1900 the Convention met in Franklin, Virginia, and authorized the Twentieth Century Fund for the school. W. C. Wicker, E. L. Moffitt and J. E. West were named to serve as a committee to raise \$20,000 for the Fund.³² A large part of this goal was reached, and President Staley retired from office in 1905, leaving the college "with a substantial student-body, a capable faculty, free from debt, and with a considerable endowment . . . preparatory to more rapid progress soon to follow."³³

One of Elon's greatest assets was the loyalty of the faculty. Atkinson, Newman, Holleman, Wicker, Moffitt, Kernodle, and Lawrence were associated with the college in one capacity or another for a period of years, some even for the remainder of their lives; and they labored for the advancement of the college by obtaining higher graduate degrees for themselves and serving long hours in the classrooms and administrative offices. One of this group, Emmett L. Moffitt, was chosen to succeed Staley as the college president.

Faculty salaries, which had totalled \$2,206.85 for the opening year of the college, had increased to \$5,750.00 by 1905; this increase was due in part to the enlargement of the teaching staff. In these first fifteen years of the existence of Elon, 1080 men and 695 women had matriculated, while 107 had graduated. The student total included 192 ministerial students. The Southern Christian Convention was informed in 1906 that tuition annually averaged \$800 less than needed to pay salaries, and funds contributed by the Church had been used to meet the deficit. Little had remained for buildings and equipment. Staley had reminded the Convention that the college

was the only institution under its care and made a dignified appeal for more funds in the following summary:

Denominational colleges stand for the best known college order because the religious motive is added to the civic motive in the regulation of student life . . . This College has nothing to recommend it but its simple earnest work. It has focused the educational spirit of our constituency, and it has returned many students to places of usefulness and honor in the local communities of our church-life.³⁴

While the Staley administration had been successful financially and academically, nothing had been added to the physical plant of the college. Moffitt was keenly aware of the need for improvement in this respect as evidenced in his description of the situation, given a half century later and with wry humor:

. . . letting my memory carry me back fifty years to this old grove, with its one building for administration, instruction and housing for male students, and it far from completed—walls not plastered, only a few split-bottom chairs for furnishings, no light but oil lamps, no heat but wood stoves, no water but the old college well, . . .³⁵

This description did not apply to the entire school, as the photographs in the 1905 college Catalogue show the three society rooms to have been comfortably furnished, wall-papered chambers. Nevertheless, there was a pressing need for improvement, and President Moffitt determined to meet it. During his six-year term, steam heating, electric lighting, sewer and bath facilities were installed in the college and numerous minor improvements made. Unfinished construction was completed and both the Central Power Station and West Dormitory were completed in 1907. The completion of these improvements gave Elon College the proper physical plant for its operation. A Special Fund of \$50,000 for the institution was completed in 1911, "which placed the College on its feet financially as it had never been before,"³⁶ and in that year the student body increased to 211 matriculates. With his objective won, President Moffitt retired in 1911 and was succeeded by William Allen Harper who had been the valedictorian of the Elon class of 1899 and had served on the faculty for the six previous years.

Elon's growth and development were also reflected in the organization and activities of the faculty. In the early days of the operation of the college the faculty met with the president and dean, not only to plan the curriculum and make plans to teach it, but also to decide many minor matters. The minutes of the faculty meetings contain numerous items such as those requiring a student to copy the United States Constitution for impertinence to a professor and another be-

ing given two demerits for failing to attend Sunday School. Two students were allowed to add biology to their courses provided they maintained a weekly average of ninety on all studies thereafter. Permission was granted to the Psiphelian Society to serve strawberries and cream on a designated Saturday evening, and the young ladies were instructed to leave the chapel services ahead of the male students. A bill of \$7.50 presented by a Mr. Cassaday for making fires in the college buildings for one month was ordered paid, and the Curator of the Library was directed to renew the subscriptions to *St. Nicholas*, *Century* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines.³⁷

By the beginning of the Harper administration, in addition to the president and dean of the college, the offices of dean of men, dean of women, librarian and assistant librarian had been created. One of the faculty members officiated as the college pastor. There were also a director and an assistant director of athletics.³⁸ The officials attended to numerous minor matters that formerly appeared on the agenda of faculty meetings, but the faculty as a whole still determined the academic program and decided many disciplinary measures. The minutes of the meeting on March 1, 1915, contain the following item:

In accordance with the recommendations of the lady members of the Faculty, the young ladies are allowed to wear brimless and steepleless caps in Chapel and class. This is supposed to apply to the town girls only.³⁹

On May 17, 1915, the Commencement program was decided:

The social privileges during the Commencement season are to be as follows: The rules relating to the association of the sexes are suspended as follows: 9 to 11 o'clock. A.M., 2 to 4:30 o'clock, P.M., except when there are exercises in the chapel. After each evening exercise in the chapel there will be allowed 30 minutes of social privileges. All social privileges are confined to the college campus.⁴⁰

Absence from the meetings where such decisions were made was viewed with displeasure, for the minutes of May 10, 1915, note, "Several members were conspicuous by their absence."⁴¹ This was unusual, as the faculty meetings were generally so well attended that salaries were even paid at that time. "Drafts were distributed by the President for the last month's salary, for which the Faculty return thanks," was recorded in the minutes on March 17, 1915.⁴²

Also in 1915 Mrs. Oma U. Johnson (Mrs. C. C. Johnson) became the librarian and served for three years. Returning to Elon in 1928, she has served the institution intermittently since and is today the custodian of the Church History Room.

The prestige of the staff was increased by the addition of two non-resident professors, Frank Samuel Child and Martyn Summerbell,

both of whom lectured on Church History and Biblical Literature during their visits to Elon.⁴³ The physical plant was also expanded in 1912 by the construction of the Young Men's Cooperative Hall and in 1913 by the erection of the Young Ladies' Cooperative Hall and the Alumni Building at a cost of \$1,400, \$6,000 and \$26,000 respectively.⁴⁴ As a result of many general improvements that were made, the enrollment topped 400 in 1915. On January 14th of the same year, Elon was admitted to membership in the Association of American Colleges and in the same year the North Carolina Department of Education rated Elon among the Class A colleges. Dr. Capen of the National Bureau of Education conducted the investigation for the state board and summarized his opinion of the school:

Well organized. Well administered. Honest. Devoted and capable faculty, paid starvation wages, but loyal. Fine, earnest student body. General impression excellent.⁴⁵

Capen also advised the immediate accumulation of a \$200,000 endowment fund in order that Elon might continue to keep up its standards. "The most gratifying item, however, has been the development along religious lines," declared President Harper. "The College pastorship is largely responsible for this, though the various voluntary associations have had a large part in the generation of the splendid spiritual tone that characterizes the institution throughout."⁴⁶

The town of Elon grew in proportion to the college as comfortable faculty homes were built on large, tree-shaded lots, graced with shrubbery and flower gardens, which greatly enhanced the appearance of the community. Additional mercantile establishments opened their doors, including a bank and a building in which the Southern Christian Publishing Company could print and distribute the *Christian Sun*.

World War I did not spare the college, and the report to the Southern Convention in 1918 of the Board of Education contained the following statement:

Of course, Elon College has suffered because of the war. In April and May of 1917, the call to the Colors took away many noble sons. For the first time in her history men were graduated from her platform clad in Khaki, and for the first time also men in distant training camps were graduated in absentia. This year the College was to have graduated forty-six. Because of the war, only 30 will receive their degrees. The first College man of the National Army to give his life in freedom's cause was Charles N. Whitelock, Elon '18. More than 300 of Elon's Alumni and students, to be exact 349 men and two ladies, are now in the various arms of the service. While our hearts bleed that their going is necessary, we can only rejoice that Elon men and women in the hour of national danger have not forgotten the noble altruism that their Alma Mater has ever sought to inculcate in her sons and daughters.⁴⁷

In 1920 the college bravely faced the changing conditions of the post-War years. The Men and Millions Movement, inaugurated by the Southern Christian Convention to raise funds for all Church activities, promised additional revenue to the school. The union of the southern Church with the American Christian Convention in 1922 also gave promise of increased support for the college. Much that was desirable remained to be done for the school, but prospects for accomplishment were brightening when disaster struck. On January 18, 1923, the Administration Building of the college burned to the ground. In that one conflagration Elon lost classrooms, library, museum, chapel, society halls, and several offices. The pessimistic prophesied that the college could not survive the loss, but William Allen Harper determined differently. Calling the student body, faculty, administration, and friends of the college together at an eleven o'clock meeting in the gymnasium while the ruins were still smoking, Harper asked for the cooperation of the students in the emergency and promised to devote his entire ability to building a greater Elon College. Then divine blessing on the project was invoked, and everyone went to work.

Cooperation was excellent and morale remained high. Makeshift classrooms were prepared in the remaining college buildings, in mercantile buildings in the town, and even in faculty homes. Many gatherings were held in the open air as the spring weather advanced. The baccalaureate sermon was preached to the senior class in the First Christian Church in nearby Burlington during Commencement, and graduation exercises were held on the campus at the spot where the O'Kelly monument stands today. Not only the membership of the Christian Church, but many members of other denominations, responded generously to the drive for funds. The *PhiPsiCli* for 1923 carried pictures of the stark brick walls left standing after the fire beside an architect's drawing of five proposed new buildings connected by a colonnade. Within the year construction was begun on these buildings which, upon completion, were named to honor prominent donors. The new Administration building was named Alamance after the citizens of the home county who paid for a large part of it. The library was in the Carlton Building; the auditorium and music studios were in the Whitley Building; and the Science Department was located in the Duke Building. The Mooney Building, devoted solely to Religious Education, was dedicated on October 3, 1926, at which time Dean Walter S. Athearn, of the Boston University School of Religious Education and Social Service, pronounced it "The first Christian Education Building on a college campus in the world."⁴⁸ The Elon College Christian Church, which had no building of its own until a sanctuary was erected in the town in 1959, held Sunday services in Whitley Auditorium and used the classrooms in

Mooney Building for Sunday School classes. In addition to the buildings, an attractive brick wall was erected around the entire campus. A summary of Elon's situation was presented to the 1924 session of the Southern Christian Convention by its Board of Education, whose membership included President Harper and all past presidents of the college:

Elon College is enjoying the crisis of her heroic history. Born in poverty, nurtured in sacrifice, threatened with destruction by a disastrous fire, hedged about with standardizing tests she must meet or lose her prestige, Elon faces the future battered but undismayed. No college ever arose more triumphant from ashes than our Elon. And while the problems which confront her have sent many an institution tottering to her demise, Elon has all the vigor of youth and resiliency in her spirit.

The rebuilding program swings steadily forward toward completion. The cost of this program is estimated as follows: five buildings, \$425,000; furniture, \$75,000; campus fence and improvements of grounds, \$52,000—total \$552,000.

Before the fire, Elon had an indebtedness incurred over a term of years for buildings and occasional annual deficits in the sum of \$114,750.00. When the rebuilding program is completed, Elon will be in debt perhaps \$300,000, all of which will be covered by subscriptions except the original indebtedness, and we hope even that.

Elon has resources as follows: value of plant after fire and before rebuilding began, as estimated by an expert appraiser of the Virginia Trust Company, \$389,810; value of rebuilding program to date (April 10), \$401,682.78, and when completed \$552,000; and endowment, \$417,195.95; total at present, \$1,208,688.73, and when completed \$1,359,005.95. Her net worth when the building program is complete will, therefore, likely be \$1,059,005.95.⁴⁹

The rebuilding program forged ahead so rapidly during the prosperous years of the early twenties that Ben Dixon MacNeill, the leading correspondent of the *Raleigh News and Observer*, wrote an article for the paper on January 25, 1925, entitled "Elon College Finds Disastrous Fire Not An Unmixed Evil." MacNeill wrote:

Elon seemed to be ruined and utterly hopeless when the flames died of their own gluttony and among the serene oaks there was nothing remaining of the things that a generation had built.

And now, after one hundred and five weeks, there is a new college risen from the ashes of the old.

But with this new magnificence Elon has surrendered nothing of the sturdiness of its ideals. There education is still education. The courses have not multiplied into scores of ineffective branches. They still educate for education's sake, and think a lot

more of being thorough in a few things than the doubtful benefits of many schools.⁵⁰

The new facilities broadened the scope of Elon's activities as nothing had ever done before. Books began to accumulate in the stacks of the library in Carlton. Ample classrooms were provided for religion and language classes for the first time. More laboratory equipment was installed in the Duke Science Building than the college had ever possessed. In Whitley there were practice rooms containing pianos and a pipe organ; and in the auditorium of the building a magnificent Skinner pipe organ was available for recitals, chapel and church programs, and public concerts. By 1930 the college had conferred degrees upon 477 students since it opened its doors. Of these, 413 had prepared themselves for teaching careers, while 118 had become ministers or gone to the mission field. The total value of the buildings and equipment of the college was \$1,148,555.87, with an endowment of \$530,896.81.⁵¹ A large part of the plant was unpaid for, but revenue had been steadily forthcoming each year to gradually retire the debt, and the future seemed assured.

On May 26, 1931, President Harper resigned his office to join the faculty of Vanderbilt University. Retiring with a commencement address entitled "The Best is Yet To Be," Harper anticipated a speedy retirement of the college debt and pictured a roseate future for the institution.⁵² His words were prophetic, but only for a short period of years, because the worst preceded the best at Elon. The Great Depression was spreading its clutches over the United States while he spoke, and the college was no more spared the disastrous economic consequences than were other institutions. Income and values plummeted downward; enrollment lagged; commitments could not be met; and pledges could not be retired. Although the physical plant of Elon was valued at \$1,187,947.81, the total liabilities amounted to \$487,971.34.⁵³ This was the situation which confronted Leon Edgar Smith, a 1910 graduate of Elon, when he left the pastorate of the Christian Temple in Norfolk, Virginia, and accepted the presidential chair of the college on November 1, 1931.

The first problem faced by the new executive was that of checking the decrease in student enrollment, and he was aided by the misfortune of another institution. Atlantic University, located at Virginia Beach, Virginia, was forced to close its doors on January 1, 1932. Through the cooperation of William Moseley Brown, president of the defunct college, thirty-one of the approximately one hundred Atlantic students enrolled at Elon College, raising the total enrollment to two hundred sixty-five. Several years later Brown joined the Elon faculty and served the college for a number of years.⁵⁴

President Smith immediately cut all expenses of the college to the bone and arranged for refinancing the most pressing obligations of the institution. The Southern Christian Convention met in Extraordinary Session just before he took office and inaugurated the Elon Emergency Fund by means of which an attempt was made to immediately raise \$50,000 to relieve the school. The Elon alumni organized a Dollar-A-Month Club to raise funds, and the College Trustees requested the observance of an "Elon College Day" for special contributions from Sunday Schools and churches.⁵⁵ Decreased salaries were one of the first economies effected, but a core of the faculty accepted reduced circumstances and remained staunchly at their posts during the Depression years. The loyalty of many faculty members to the school through the years has been an inspiring tribute to the institution. Gradually, the combined efforts of staff, faculty, the Church, and the friends of Elon College began to turn the tide, and the financial crisis began to recede in intensity. Campaign after campaign for funds was held. The results increased as the American economy improved until finally progress could again be discerned.

After having been on the approved list for several years, the Southern Association of Colleges included Elon in its membership in December 1946. This distinction, won after twenty-five years of effort, increased the prestige of the college. Shortly afterward an Evening School was organized and, with the prolific use made of the G-I Bill at the close of World War II, several hundred students were soon enrolled in the night classes. In 1949 the greatly needed Alumni Memorial Gymnasium was completed, to be followed in 1956 by McEwen Dining Hall and two dormitories named Virginia Hall and Carolina Hall. The following year Smith Dormitory was completed. The faculty had increased to fifty-six full time members and the graduates numbered one hundred fifty-four that year. The value of the physical plant had risen to \$2,827,164, with an indebtedness of \$736,000, which was being met. The endowment was \$955,157. With the college thus operating smoothly, Leon Edgar Smith became President Emeritus on June 30, 1957. On the following day, after an appropriate prayer service, James Earl Danieley became President of Elon College.⁵⁶

President Danieley was born and reared in the vicinity of Elon College. He served the college as an instructor in chemistry immediately after his graduation from the institution in 1946. In addition to his teaching, he had served for three years as Dean of the college and had studied at the University of North Carolina and at Johns Hopkins University. At the age of thirty-two, Danieley was one of the youngest men in the nation ever to have been entrusted with the presidency of a college, and his youth and vigor proved to be exactly the

qualities Elon needed most at the time. During the first semester of his administration, 880 students enrolled in the day classes, 544 in the Evening School, and there were 44 special students, making a total student body of 1,468.⁵⁷ In 1968 Frederick College, located at Portsmouth, Virginia, changed its four year program to that of a community college, and again Elon benefitted from a situation involving another educational institution. By special arrangement, 209 of the students transferred to Elon with full credit for their work at Frederick. Furthermore, the numerous scholarships which had been granted to members of this group were transferred by the donors to Elon, and the students lost nothing academically or financially in the transfer. Enrollment increased steadily, and there are more than 1,800 students in the college today.

To accommodate the increasing size of the college, facilities were enlarged in 1961 by the construction of Sloan Dormitory (called New Dormitory until renamed in 1972). Two years later a commodious home was built for the president, followed in 1966 by a dormitory complex named Hook, Brannock and Barney, and the William S. Long Student Center. Two years later the Iris Holt McEwen Library was completed; and Staley Hall, Moffitt Hall, and Harper Center were added to the housing facilities. In 1970 the gymnasium was enlarged to include a spacious swimming pool, and the Classroom-Office Building was erected. Meanwhile, Alamance, Duke, Mooney, and Whitley Buildings have been completely renovated and similar improvements begun on Carlton Building. The power plant has been remodeled, walkways paved, parking lots laid out, and the entire college provided with new and improved equipment. The present value of Elon is \$9,571,888, with a bonded indebtedness of \$3,421,996 which is being satisfactorily retired. The endowment has increased to \$2,928,862.⁵⁸ Not only have these physical improvements been made, but the Danieley administration has kept abreast, and often ahead, of current trends in education. With the increasing addition of the most improved equipment, many innovations in teaching methods have been made possible and used successfully. The entire curriculum has been revised; graduation requirements have been changed; and studies to improve the program are constantly in progress. Accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges has been maintained, and the professional status of the faculty rises annually. Thousands of alumni have brought credit to their Alma Mater as they have filled useful and productive places in the world's work. The maroon and gold banner of Elon College rose slowly from the oak grove at Mill Point and was often severely shaken, but today it securely waves over a well-equipped college "offering Christian training and instruction"⁵⁹ as an affiliate of the United Church of Christ.

Footnotes

- ¹ *Annual* 1883, 28.
- ² *Ibid*, 28-30. See also Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 191.
- ³ *Annual* 1887, 23-24.
- ⁴ *Ibid*, 24.
- ⁵ *Annual* 1889, 17.
- ⁶ *Ibid*, 22.
- ⁷ *Ibid*, 22-23.
- ⁸ *Sun*, July 5, 1888. According to recorded deeds, the donor of the land at Mill Point spelled his name "Trolinger" on some occasions and "Trollinger" at other times. The latter spelling is in general use today.
- ⁹ *Ibid*, November 1, 1888.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid*, January 3, 1889. See also, Wilbur E. MacClenny, "The Evolution of Elon College," *Sun*, October 19, 1939. Hereinafter cited as MacClenny, "Elon College."
- ¹¹ *Sun*, January 24, 1889.
- ¹² Will S. Long, "The College is Founded," *Sun*, October 5, 1939. Hereafter cited as Long, "College is Founded."
- ¹³ *Sun*, January 17, 1889.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid*, August 11, 1889.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid*, January 24, 1889.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*, May 16, 1889.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*, April 11, 1889.
- ¹⁸ Long, "College is Founded."
- ¹⁹ MacClenny, "Elon College."
- ²⁰ *Sun*, July 13, 1910; Long, "College is Founded."
- ²¹ *Sun*, May 26, 1889.
- ²² *Ibid*, June 5, 1890.
- ²³ *Sun*, September 4, 1890.
- ²⁴ *Ibid*, January 24, 1889.
- ²⁵ *Annual* 1891, 31.
- ²⁶ Mary L. Mackintosh, *History of Town of Elon College*. (Elon College, North Carolina: Privately Printed, 1968), pages unnumbered. Hereinafter cited as Mackintosh, *Town of Elon College*.
- ²⁷ *Elon College Catalogue* 1895-1896, 18-19. All catalogues of Elon College were privately printed and are hereinafter cited as *Catalogue*, with the addition of the specified years.
- ²⁸ *Annual* 1895, 9-10.
- ²⁹ *Catalogue* 1891-1892.
- ³⁰ *Catalogue* 1892-1893; *Catalogue* 1897-1898.
- ³¹ *Ibid*.
- ³² *Annual* 1899, 14-15; *Annual* 1901, 19-21.
- ³³ William Allen Harper, "History of Elon College—1889-1915," *PhiPsiCli* 1915, 16. *PhiPsiCli* is the Year Book published by the Senior Class of Elon College annually since 1913, except for the years 1918, 1919, and 1932. Hereinafter cited as *PhiPsiCli* with the proper year indicated.
- ³⁴ *Annual* 1907, 56-60.
- ³⁵ Emmett L. Moffitt, "The Original Faculty of Elon College," *Sun*, September 21, 1939.
- ³⁶ *PhiPsiCli* 1915, 16.
- ³⁷ *Records of the Proceedings of the Faculty of Elon College, 1893-1894*. (Except for the years 1890-1892, the records of the Elon College Faculty meetings have been

preserved and are housed in the administrative offices of the college.) Hereinafter cited as *Proceedings of the Faculty*, with the proper years added.

³⁸ *PhiPsiCli* 1915, 10-11.

³⁹ *Proceedings of the Faculty* 1915.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *PhiPsiCli* 1913, front-page; *PhiPsiCli* 1915, front-page.

⁴⁴ *Annual* 1915, 13-14.

⁴⁵ *Annual* 1917, 17.

⁴⁶ *PhiPsiCli* 1915, 16.

⁴⁷ *Annual* 1919, 11.

⁴⁸ Program of the Service of Dedication of Mooney Building, Elon College, October 3, 1926. Copy in the Church History Room.

⁴⁹ *Annual* 1925, 28-29.

⁵⁰ *News and Observer*, (Raleigh, North Carolina), January 25, 1925.

⁵¹ *Annual* 1930, 40-41.

⁵² *Sun*, May 28, 1931.

⁵³ *Annual* 1931, 4-8.

⁵⁴ *Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Elon College*, February 1932.

⁵⁵ *Annual* 1932, 25-27.

⁵⁶ *Annual* 1958, 53-56.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Figures supplied by the Business Office of Elon College.

⁵⁹ Quoted from the Charter of Elon College.

Chapter IX

The Women of the Church

In the closing years of the eighteenth century woman's role in religious affairs consisted principally of attending church services, providing hospitality for visiting itinerants, and encouraging husbands, families and friends to participate in the program of the Church. References to females often reveal a deep respect for the inspirational value of their interest in religion. In 1787 the Methodist circuit rider, James Meacham, mentioned accompanying "bro. Ogburn" to pay a courtesy visit to Mrs. O'Kelly, the wife of "Presiding Elder [of] Virginia." Two years later the minister recorded an overnight stay in "Sister S. J.'s" home:

She shew me many of her letters from our preachers & people . . . amongst which she shewed me one of dear Bro. O'Kelly's Journals for the year 86—in the Evening I retired to read it and to embrace prayer and Meditation.¹

At the time, woman's only part in the Methodist Episcopal organization was membership in the Church. The status of females was exactly the same with the southern Christians after they organized in 1794, and it changed very little until the closing years of the nineteenth century. Condolences to the wives of deceased ministers were occasionally recorded, as in 1843, when the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference honored the widow of Elder Lewis Craven with a lifetime subscription to the *Christian Sun*,² but there was almost no other mention of women at all.

In the northern area of the Christian Connection Mrs. Abigail Roberts, a convert of Mrs. Nancy Cram, began preaching in 1816. Convinced that Christian evangelism was not a prerogative of the males, she persevered in her endeavor throughout her life, although

many churches were closed to her and she was actually persecuted because of her sex.³ One year after Mrs. Roberts began to preach the Baltimore Female Mite Society was organized and, with annual dues of only fifty cents per member, soon raised seven hundred dollars "for the education of heathen children in India."⁴ Despite the success of this group, no further record of a female organization has been found until 1857, when the Ladies' Auxiliary Mission Society of the New York Western Christian Conference was in operation, constituting "the first woman's conference missionary society" of the Christian Connection.⁵

In 1839 the Christian Conference in the Valley of Virginia took the unusual step of recognizing the wife of Frederick G. Miller as his official associate in preaching. The Conference voted, "That we approbate the propriety of Brother Miller and his wife Rebecca, laboring on the southern circuit the ensuing year."⁶ The minister, a native of Maryland, had married Rebecca L. Chaney of Ohio, and both had moved to the Shenandoah Valley in the same year the approval was granted. Criticism of the participation by Mrs. Miller in her husband's ministry evoked a lengthy exposition on the "Duty of Females," which was published in the *Christian Palladium*. After citing scriptural references to validate her championship of woman's place in evangelism, the author summarized her argument as follows:

From what has been said, we may ascertain,

1st. That in Old Testament times, women were divinely authorized to prophesy.

2d. That they were authors of considerable of the Scriptures.

3d. That Paul did not close the door against them under the gospel.

4th. What prophesying means, and its extent, even to the whole church.

5th. That there is a rule laid down for females to observe in their public officiations.

6th. That females did prophesy under the new economy, and that by the express injunction of the Almighty; 'they shall prophesy.'

7th. That it continued throughout the history of the New Testament: hence, it is presumed it was to continue till the end of time.⁷

Not only did Mrs. Miller defend the rights of women, but she also challenged the female membership of the Christian Connection to a more active participation in religious activities. In all probability more would have been heard from this champion of women had not both she and her husband died suddenly within a few days of each other in 1844.⁸ As it was, Mrs. Miller was a precursor of the formal organization of women in the southern Christian Church which took place seventy years later.

In the South there were doubtless local church groups of women who engaged in community charities and cared for some of the furnishings of the church buildings and pastoral homes, but the women among the southern Christians were not a part of any Church-wide organization until 1886. In that year the American Christian Convention, meeting at New Bedford, Massachusetts, authorized the establishment of the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions.⁹ Because of the increasing effort being made at the time to restore amicable relations between North and South, the Board was created to serve the entire Christian Connection. At the next session of the Convention the following action was approved:

At a meeting of thirty ladies in attendance at the A.C.C., in Marion, Ind., October 11, 1890, "The Woman's Board for Home Missions of the A.C.C." was organized with the following officers: President, Rev. Mary Strickland; Vice-President, Mrs. O. H. Keller; Rec. Secretary, Miss C. Ella Keifer; Cor. Secretary, Mrs. J. P. Watson; Treasurer, Mrs. D. A. Long. Mrs. T. A. Jones, of Norfolk, Va., and Mrs. E. K. Bishop were chosen as members of the Executive Committee.¹⁰

The placing of southern women on this Board constituted the first known official connection of the women in the southern Christian Church with any formal religious organization.

In 1867 Mrs. Melissa Timmons Terrell began to preach among the Christians in Ohio. As far as is known, she is the next woman to do so after Mrs. Abigail Roberts, who had died in 1841. However, in the latter years of the nineteenth century women preachers began to emerge in larger numbers, and there were at least sixteen of them by the end of the century. These were located almost entirely in the mid-western states; none were in the South. Some of them were formally ordained, while others were simply recognized by their conferences as authorized preachers; and all were accorded the respectful title of "Reverend."¹¹ There may have been other female preachers whose names are unknown.

In the South women first gained official recognition by being elected delegates to conferences. In 1887 the First Christian Church in Burlington, North Carolina, named Miss Sallie Turrentine (later Mrs. William H. Carroll), and Miss Addie J. Denny (later Mrs. James LaFond), to represent its congregation at the next meeting of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference. Miss Turrentine attended the session and was the first female delegate recorded in the Minutes of any southern Christian conference.¹² The indications are that other women, whose names were not mentioned, had attended earlier, as W. S. Long offered the following proposal to the 1888 Conference:

WHEREAS, Some churches have from time to time represented themselves in this body by female representatives only; and whereas, we deem this unwise and contrary to former custom; therefore

Resolved. That the churches comprising this Conference be requested to send male representatives hereinafter as delegates.¹³

This motion was discussed by Delegates Jones, S. B. Klapp, Holt, Hurley, Wellons, and Staley, but was tabled. The women had won their right to participate in the Church organization, and in 1890 the Burlington Church was represented by Miss Callie Holt (later Mrs. R. M. Morrow) and the Christian Church at High Point, North Carolina, by Miss Sallie Bolling.¹⁴ In 1910 there were ten women delegates at the Conference, and female participation continued to increase.¹⁵

The Conference in the Valley of Virginia recorded no women delegates in 1892 but authorized a Foreign Missions Committee composed of Ada A. Swank, Fannie Simmers and Mollie Deavers.¹⁶ Two years later Miss Lelia Herndon represented Martha's Chapel at the first session of the newly organized Eastern North Carolina Conference, and the representatives at the Eastern Virginia Conference in 1902 included Mrs. Fanny M. Martino from Norfolk and Mrs. M. S. Harrell from Portsmouth.¹⁷ Female participation increased, and in 1918 delegates to the Southern Christian Convention included Mrs. Charles H. Rowland from the Eastern Virginia Conference, Mrs. William A. Harper from the North Carolina and Virginia Conference, and both Mrs. Boyd R. Richards and Mrs. W. T. Walters from the Virginia Valley Conference.¹⁹

The records of the Eastern Virginia Christian Conference for 1879 contain the recommendation of a committee on Missions that a Ladies Missionary Union be established in every church, but apparently no action followed the proposal. No steps were taken to plan Church work for women until 1906, when the influence of W. W. Staley moved the Southern Christian Convention to appoint a committee composed of W. G. Clements, P. H. Fleming, L. G. Johnson, Mrs. W. H. Carroll, and Mrs. J. O. Atkinson "to prepare a plan of organization for Women's Missionary Societies."¹⁹ Having failed to complete its assignment by the next biennial meeting of the Convention, the same group was reappointed to continue its work. Accordingly, the following report was submitted to the 1910 session of the Convention:

WHEREAS, there is at the present time no distinct uniform Missionary Organization for the women of the Southern Christian Convention; be it

Resolved, That a committee composed of women, one from each Conference, be appointed by the President at the present

session of the Convention, said committee to be known as the Woman's Board for Home and Foreign Missions in the South.

PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

The duty of the board when appointed shall be to prepare a constitution, submit same to the several Conferences for approval, and ask that the Conference appoint a Woman's Missionary Board for Home and Foreign Missions.²⁰

In compliance with this approved proposal, the Board for Woman's Missionary Societies was established with Mrs. McDaniel Howsare of Norfolk, Virginia, president; and Miss Bettie Stephenson, Roanoke, Alabama; Mrs. W. H. Elder, Richland, Georgia; Mrs. J. O. Atkinson, Elon College, North Carolina; and Mrs. W. H. Carroll, Burlington, North Carolina, members.²¹

The adoption of this plan by the Convention inspired Mrs. Howsare's husband to write "The Need of Missionary Societies Among the Women of the South," which appeared in the Missionary Department of the *Christian Sun* in 1911. Such organizations were described as excellent media for "literary culture" and "social intercourse" among the members, in addition to inspiring "larger and more intelligent giving to missions." Howsare also commented:

It deepens the spiritual life. No group of women can get together and study long the spread of the Master's kingdom in the world without a very vital effect upon each other spiritually.²²

The advantages specified in the Howsare article proved to be correct, for perhaps no other organization of the time did as much for the liberation of the southern Christian Church women from the relative obscurity of housekeeping as the missionary societies. They furnished a medium by which the women learned organizational procedure, augmented their knowledge, broadened their perspective, and experienced an independent part in affairs of their Church which prepared them for participation in the world's work generally. From this time on, the importance of the women in the program of the Church ascended steadily.

The women in the Eastern Virginia Conference met on December 5, 1911, and elected the following officers for their Conference Board: Mrs. Charles H. Rowland, president; Mrs. W. H. Dick, treasurer; and Miss Margaret Brickhouse, secretary. At the conclusion of their first year's work this dynamic group proudly reported to its Conference a total membership of 275 in 9 newly organized societies. The sum of \$320 had been raised for the Board treasury. In addition, it reported:

Two children's societies have been reported, and two cradle rolls. Three societies have been studying some missionary textbook, such as "Western Women in Eastern Lands", or "The Decisive Hour in Christian Missions". Four societies have combined to raise \$115.00, the salary of a Bible woman in Japan. One society

has sent \$50.50 on Pedro Roman's salary. In many churches the organization of the work is being carefully considered.²³

In the Virginia Valley Central Christian Conference the organizational meeting heard inspiring addresses from Warren Hathaway Denison, of the Memorial Christian Temple in Norfolk, and his wife, who was a member of the Women's Mission Board of the American Christian Convention. The officers elected at the meeting were Mrs. W. T. Walters, president; Miss H. C. O. Martz, secretary; and Miss Ivey D. Andes, treasurer. Detailed plans were made for the expansion of the work in the Conference.²⁴

In 1912 the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference appointed Mrs. L. E. Smith of Greensboro, North Carolina; Mrs. Minnie Farmer Cook, secretary; and Mrs. L. M. Clymer, treasurer.²⁵

The Western North Carolina Christian Conference, at its 1911 session, appointed Mrs. W. H. Carroll, Mrs. T. E. White and Mrs. T. A. Moffitt to serve as its Woman's Board.²⁶ The members of the Eastern North Carolina Christian Conference Board have not been identified, but the report for its work was made to the 1912 Conference by Mrs. L. F. Johnson and Mrs. A. F. Smith.²⁷ Also, in 1912 the Alabama Christian Conference created a Woman's Missionary Board composed of Mrs. J. T. Clack, Mrs. John S. Sledge, and Misses Janie Pool, Lois Carter, Mattie Allen, and Nannie Carden.²⁸ The following year the Georgia and Alabama Christian Conference established its Woman's Board under the chairmanship of Mrs. A. A. Terrell, with Mrs. W. T. Beggs, Mrs. H. W. Elder, Mrs. J. B. Harris, and Mrs. Rosa Partridge as members.²⁹

With the women in each Conference properly organized, the work of the missionary movement soon accelerated. When the Howsare family removed to Ohio in 1912, Mrs. C. H. Rowland replaced Mrs. Howsare as president of the Convention's Board, and the program was not allowed to lag. By February of that year a model constitution had been drafted for the guidance of the Conference organizations and the aims of each defined:

Its object shall be to organize a Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society and a Mission Study Class in every local church, and to increase the interest in Missions among the churches of this Conference.³⁰

Also in 1912 Mrs. Rowland reported to the Convention that plans had been made for a Cradle Roll Department and the organization of a "Willing Workers" Society for youth in the Church. Furthermore, the editor of the *Christian Sun* had provided space in the periodical to be known as the "Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Department," through which the progress of the program could be publicized.³¹ The prospects for success in woman's work in the southern

Christian Church were glowing and they continued to brighten in the ensuing years.

The Woman's Board met in the Christian Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, on May 22, 1912. It set a goal of \$1,000 per year to be raised through the following apportionment among the conferences:

Eastern Virginia	\$300
Western North Carolina	150
North Carolina and Virginia	150
Eastern North Carolina	150
Alabama	75
Georgia and Alabama	80
Virginia Valley Central	100

Miss Bettie Stephenson was elected Superintendent of Young People's Work, which included the "Willing Workers" and the Cradle Roll.³²

The Board held its next meeting on May 26, 1913, at Elon College, at which time Miss Stephenson resigned her superintendency and was succeeded in that capacity by Mrs. L. F. Johnson. Mrs. W. H. Carroll was elected Superintendent of Literature and Mite Boxes.³³

Immediately following the Board meeting at Elon College, an assembly composed of representatives from all the conferences met at the College. At this first session of its kind, termed a "mass" meeting, the decision was made to meet periodically, and the organization was named the Woman's Missionary Convention of the Southern Christian Convention. The delegates who attended this pioneer event were:

Eastern Virginia Conference: Mesdames T. A. Savage, J. W. Manning, L. W. Stagg, B. F. Gibson, W. H. Denison, J. B. Faison, J. J. Lincoln, Sallie Holland, C. H. Rowland, J. B. Gay; Misses Jessie Brinkley, Bessie Norfleet and Viola Rollings.

Eastern North Carolina Conference: Mesdames Irene Cook and L. F. Johnson; Misses Bertha Cotton and Esther Poythress.

Western North Carolina Conference: Mesdames D. E. Sellers, W. H. Carroll, Edward Teague; Misses Pearle Hatch, Mollie Allen and Blennie Brewer.

North Carolina and Virginia Conference: Mesdames M. F. Cook, J. W. Patton, W. A. Harper, W. P. Lawrence, Robert Williams, L. M. Clymer, Sue Jones, J. R. McNally, and Miss Esther Kent.

Alabama Conference: Miss Bettie Stephenson.

Virginia Valley Central Conference: Mesdames W. T. Walters and J. K. Ruebush; Misses Dick Roads and Augusta Richards.

The "Willing Workers" were represented by Miss Martha Page from the Western North Carolina Conference and Miss Mary Thompson from the North Carolina and Virginia Conference, while Miss

Mamie Holland represented the Virginia "Young People." President Harper of Elon College and seventeen ministers of the Church attended the Convention as interested guests. Mrs. J. Pressley Barret of Ohio and J. O. Atkinson both delivered inspirational addresses to the delegation. The Convention at this time was made up of thirty-four societies composed of four hundred and thirty-eight members.³⁴

With the completion of their organizational structure, the women of the southern Church energetically began to widen the scope of their enterprise. According to the decision made at Elon College to hold their future meetings in coincidence with the sessions of the Southern Christian Convention, the second Woman's Convention met on April 29, 1914, in the First Christian Church of Portsmouth, Virginia. Encouraging gains for the past year were reported by the Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. W. A. Harper:

Woman's Missionary Societies	35
Young People's Societies	5
Willing Worker Societies	9
Churches Using Mite Boxes	12
Churches Having Cradle Rolls	<u>3</u>
Total Organizations	64
Total membership	762
Mission Study Classes	17 ³⁵

Because of the additional supervisory work necessitated by the increase in membership, three superintendencies were authorized instead of two, and appointed as follows: Mrs. W. V. Leathers, Superintendent of Young People; Mrs. J. J. Lincoln, Superintendent of Literature and Mite Boxes; Mrs. L. F. Johnson, Superintendent of the Cradle Roll. Progress had also been made financially, for, although only \$722.27 of the annual goal of \$1,000 had been raised in 1912, \$1,118 had been contributed in 1913. This stimulated the Convention to increase its yearly goal to \$2,000.³⁶

An inspiring program was also presented during the session, the high light of which was a talk by Mrs. D. P. Barrett, a missionary returned from Puerto Rico.

The Convention enthusiastically adopted the "Standard of Excellence for Societies," which was designed to improve the efficiency of its program. The provisions were:

1. A ten per cent increase in membership.
2. A[n] early increase in gifts.
3. Quarterly payments before Dec. 20th., Mar. 31st., June 30th., Sept. 30th.
4. A subscription list to the Christian Missionary equal to one half of the membership of the Society.
5. All letters from officers promptly answered.
6. Every Society pursuing the study of some mission topic.

7. One praise or thank offering service held during the year.
8. An average attendance at regular meetings equal to two-thirds of the membership.
9. A representative at the Missionary Conference to which the Society belongs.
10. Earnest prayer for the missionaries supported by societies, [and] for the Board officers.³⁷

In order to supplement the endeavor, the Convention voted to request each member to pay five cents annually for a Contingency Fund and an equal sum for a Literature Fund. A constitution for the Convention was also adopted, and cooperation with the Woman's Board of the American Christian Convention was expressed by the vote to send Mrs. Rowland as a delegate to the next meeting of that Board in Springfield, Ohio.³⁸ During the ensuing years the southern organization continued to send representatives to the meetings of the American Convention Board and maintained a cordial relationship with the northern Christian women.

Inspired by the accomplishments of the meeting, and with a detailed schedule of activities upon which to concentrate, the delegates returned home to devote their abilities generously to the program in their own localities. Beginning in 1912, the records of the various Conferences contain annual reports which give the details of the work of their Woman's Mission Boards. The increasingly impressive accounts of growth in membership, extension of services, increased study and financial support made an inspirational impact on the male membership of both the Conferences and the Southern Christian Convention. Woman's work was successful from its organizational beginning and rose in the esteem of the Church as it continued to grow in value to the southern Christians.

The third session of the Convention was held in Burlington, North Carolina, on May 3, 1916. One especially interesting feature of the program was a talk by Miss Sato San, a Japanese student at Elon College, who also sang "Bringing in the Sheaves" in her native language. An inspiring letter was read from Mrs. Alice V. Morrill of Dayton, Ohio, which urged the women to "Plan, Push, Persist, Pray."³⁹ Arrangements for speakers with a personal knowledge of missionary work to appear on the Convention programs was made whenever possible, as the women never lost sight of the fact that the basic aim of their organization was the promotion of missions. Accordingly, the delegates to the 1918 session, which met at Franklin, Virginia, heard Miss Olive G. Williams, a missionary of the Christian Church to Puerto Rico, give an impressive account of her work.⁴⁰ Other missionaries appeared on subsequent programs from time to time and inspired an increased enthusiasm for the work.

In 1915 the Woman's Mission Board employed Miss Annie Williams of Burlington, North Carolina, to serve for four months as a Field Secretary to organize new societies, and the results of this appointment were excellent.⁴¹ The following year a new department was deemed necessary and Mrs. J. W. Patton was made Superintendent of the Boys' Department. Financial growth was correspondingly impressive as shown in the following report of the Woman's Mission Board to the Southern Christian Convention in 1918:

1912-14	\$1,910.27
1914-16	3,116.25
1916-18	5,585.97

For the year just closed, one Conference alone reported for one quarter, more than all our Conferences contributed during the first year of our organized work.

.....

We call especial attention to the example of the young people of the Eastern Virginia Conference, who have assumed the responsibility of supporting a native pastor in Santa Isabel, at a salary of \$500.00. This called for faith and courage, but they have proven themselves equal to the task.⁴²

This report contains another reason for the high value placed on the work of the women: it was reaching the youth of the Church from the cradle upward, as no other program of the southern Christians had ever done and, in doing so, provided an invaluable supplement to the programs of the Sunday Schools and Christian Endeavor.

In 1918 Mrs. C. H. Rowland retired from the presidency of the Board and of the Convention after an efficient and productive service of seven years. Mrs. W. A. Harper was elected president and filled the office with dedicated leadership until 1922. The expansion of the women's activities continued to be so impressive that J. E. West included the following tribute in his 1920 report for the Mission Board of the Southern Christian Convention:

That inasmuch as our Women's Missionary Societies have proven such blessings to the churches in which they have been organized, that we urge all our pastors to seek the co-operation of the Woman's Board and the Mission Secretary to organize a Woman's and a Young People's Society in each church.⁴³

This recommendation was further clarified by Mrs. Harper's report to the Southern Christian Convention two years later:

BIENNIUM	RAISED	RATE OF INCREASE
1918-20	\$12,753.35	130% increase
1920-22	21,026.46	65% increase ⁴⁴

Mrs. Harper resigned the presidency in 1922 and was succeeded by Mrs. W. H. Carroll, who served in that capacity until 1926.

In the early twenties the interest of the Woman's Societies became concentrated on the maintenance of Sunday Schools; Bible study for women; and schools for boys in Sendai, Japan; a chapel at Playa in Puerto Rico; and home mission work through a church in Richmond, Virginia. The Young People's work was directed toward the Santa Isabel field in Puerto Rico, home missions in the Virginia mountains, the maintenance of a Japanese student at Elon College, and the support of several children in the Elon Christian Orphanage. The Cradle Roll contributions were directed to the Sendai field in Japan and the Elon Christian Orphanage. The Boys' Department was merged into the Young People's Department in 1922, but this change did not lessen the administrative work to any great extent. The burden of executive duties was relieved appreciably in 1924 when Miss Pattie Lee Coghill was employed by the Southern Christian Convention to devote half of her time to the Board of Religious Education and half to the position of Field Secretary to the Woman's Mission Board.⁴⁵ With the efficient assistance of the Secretary, the work of the women was accelerated to a greater extent than ever before. This progress was apparent in Mrs. Carroll's biennial presidential report to the Southern Christian Convention in 1926:

Number of Churches	210
Number of Woman's Societies	75
Number of Members	1,275
Number of Young People's Societies	40
Number of Members	771
Number of Willing Workers' Societies	22
Number of Members	310
Number of Cradle Rolls	32
Number of Members	499
Grand total amount raised	\$20,664.10 ⁴⁶

Mrs. J. A. Williams was elected president of the Woman's Mission Board in 1926 and served until 1933. During her first biennial term the scope of the Board's activities was widened by the creation of three new administrative offices. Mrs. W. H. Carroll became the first Superintendent of the Department of Spiritual Life; Mrs. M. J. W. White was elected Superintendent of Life Memberships and Memorials; and Mrs. M. W. Jay was named Convention editor. The goal of \$25,000, which had been set for the 1928-30 biennium, was surpassed with a total of \$26,004.01 contributed. The larger part of this sum was disbursed in the Foreign Mission fields of Japan and Puerto Rico and the Home Mission work in the Richmond and Ocean View churches in Virginia, the Raleigh church in North Carolina, the Roanoke church in Alabama, the Elon orphanage, and work in the mountains of Virginia.⁴⁷ By the end of the next biennium the effects of the Great Depression were being felt and only \$24,320 of the

\$27,000 goal was raised.⁴⁸ Consequently, the goal for 1934 was lowered to \$24,000, but only \$18,261.05 was raised. This was discouraging, but the women of the Church did not cease their efforts. In 1934 Mrs. Williams reported to the Southern Christian Convention:

We have passed through deep waters since our last Convention. Depression, unemployment, losses, strain, uncertainty, have engaged our minds, absorbed our energies, sapped our strength. Yet our presence here today shows that we have not lost faith, that hope has not vanished and that divine impulses still impel us. The fact is many spiritual values have come and have given us courage to carry on. When days were dark, our prayers, "Give us this day our daily bread," took a new meaning. We realize that there was soul hunger to share with others who had suffered more deeply than ourselves. Our thoughts in those days have, at least, now and then, reverted to gifts compact in, and symbolized by, Missions.⁴⁹

The sentiments of their leader were shared by the women of the Church, and in that spirit they carried on their work.

Mrs. Walter R. Sellars became president in 1934 and served until 1936. She was followed in office by Mrs. John G. Truitt who served until 1939. During the tenure of the latter executive, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Woman's work was celebrated by a special service in the Suffolk Christian Church. Miss Ruth I. Seabury, L. E. Smith, I. W. Johnson, J. O. Atkinson, and J. E. West appeared on the program. A special feature of this meeting was the reception of a "Mission offering in memory of Dr. W. W. Staley, which amounted to \$2,000.00." In 1937 the Convention was composed of 89 Women's Societies, 48 Young People's Societies, 25 Junior Societies, and 34 Cradle Rolls.⁵⁰ In 1939 the distribution of a Year Book proved to be a valuable aid to the societies in planning their study programs.

Mrs. J. Monroe Harris succeeded Mrs. Truitt in 1939 and served as president until 1943. During the terms of these two presidents district divisions were formed by several of the conferences to carry out their program more efficiently with an expanding membership. The societies in all of the Conferences were busily engaged in various activities connected with the Missions enterprise, and each achieved a praiseworthy record of accomplishment which fills many interesting pages in the annals of the Woman's Missions work. Because of the expanding membership and the increase in administrative transactions, it became inconvenient in many ways for the Woman's convention to meet in conjunction with the Southern Christian Convention meetings. To relieve this situation, the Woman's Convention decided in 1938 to hold their biennial sessions in alternate years when the Southern Convention did not convene.⁵¹ As a result of this decision, the women met separately for the first time in 1939. The work of the

Woman's Convention was further supplemented by the creation of two new departments. The 1941 records show that in addition to the usual organizational officials there were Superintendents of Life Membership and Memorials, Cradle Roll, Children, Spiritual Life, Young People, and Literature, and a Convention Editor.

Over two hundred delegates attended the 1939 meeting at Elon College. A particularly interesting item of business transacted was the decision to hold a "School of Missions" each summer at Elon College "for the training of Christian workers." The aim of the School was to gather as many as two hundred women together to hear "those speakers and leaders" who had formerly been heard by only the few delegates to the larger Missionary Conferences, and to "profit by such contacts." As a result of this action, the School became a reality for two years, then was discontinued until after the emergency conditions of World War II ceased to exist.⁵² Also, at the same session the progress of the Staley Memorial Fund was discussed. Two years later the Convention began another Memorial Fund in honor of J. O. Atkinson, who died in 1940.⁵³ As Mission Secretary of the Southern Christian Convention for many years Atkinson had worked in close conjunction with the Woman's Mission Board from its beginning, and his counsel and encouragement were of invaluable benefit to its work. His passing was a great loss to the woman's missionary enterprise.

At the 1943 Convention Mrs. William E. Wisseman, the former Graham Rowland, was elected president and served the ensuing four years. As the daughter of Mrs. C. H. Rowland, the new executive already possessed an exceptional knowledge of the presidential duties when she accepted the office, and this proved an important asset during her administration. At the same meeting the Friendly Service Department listed many projects in which the societies were engaged, including boxes of clothing sent to the Japanese Evacuees at Santa Monica, California; supplies sent to a hospital at Grants, New Mexico, and to Southern Union College in Wadley, Alabama; and serving as replacements during seven hundred hours for the Grey Ladies of the Naval Hospital at Portsmouth, Virginia. The total money raised for the biennial ending in 1943 was \$21,433.86, which was sufficiently encouraging for the goal to be raised to \$22,500.00 for the next biennium.⁵⁴

Because of travel restrictions made necessary by the War, all Spring Rallies and the Woman's Convention were cancelled for the year 1945. Instead of the customary gatherings, the local societies were urged to hold "Stay-At-Home" Conventions. The plan was successful, as the president reported, "What we missed in the inspiration of meeting together as a unit was balanced by the number of women who were touched in these Conventions." Mrs. Wisseman was

also justly proud that the biennial contributions in 1945 totalled \$28,109.15, which far exceeded the goal of \$22,500, and constituted "the largest amount given in a biennium in our history."⁵⁵

The president of the Woman's Convention automatically served on the Mission Board of the Southern Christian Convention. Mrs. Wisseman not only officiated in that capacity but also was made a member of the Executive Board of that organization and Chairman of its Promotion Division. Several new departments and offices were created to meet the administrative demands of the expanding program, and these can best be comprehended by a complete list of the officials elected at the 1947 Convention:

- President—Mrs. O. H. Paris, Greensboro, N. C.
- Vice-President—Mrs. F. C. Lester, Asheboro, N. C.
- Recording Secretary—Mrs. H. S. Smith, Durham, N. C.
- Corresponding Secretary—Mrs. J. R. Darden, Holland, Va.
- Treasurer—Mrs. W. V. Leathers, Suffolk, Va.
- Historian—Mrs. L. W. Stagg, Norfolk, Va.
- Editor—Mrs. W. J. Andes, Winston-Salem, N. C.
- Superintendent Young People—Mrs. J. D. Strader, Burlington, N. C.
- Superintendent Children—Mrs. W. E. Wisseman, Greensboro, N. C.
- Superintendent Cradle Roll—Mrs. Orva Brown, Asheboro, N. C.
- Chairman Life-Memberships and Memorials—Mrs. Wm. T. Harrel, Suffolk, Va.
- Chairman Spiritual Life—Mrs. R. T. Bradford, Suffolk, Va. (Route 2).
- Chairman Literature—Mrs. W. T. Scott, Elon College, N. C.
- Chairman Friendly Service—Mrs. W. B. Williams, Newport News, Va.
- Chairman Christian Family Life—Mrs. Robert Kimball, Franklin, Va.
- Chairman Interdenominational Cooperation—Mrs. R. A. Whitten, Winchester, Va.
- Chairman Visual Aids—Miss Elizabeth Chicoine, Elon College, N. C.⁵⁶

Administrative efficiency was clearly evident in the admirable departmental reports made at the 1947 session. The details of the many phases in which the Christian women were active show that the War, while curtailing some fields of endeavor, had opened opportunities in others. Especially interesting was the activity of Friendly Service:

Throughout the years, the department has stressed books, toys, food and clothing to children in Carroll County, Japanese evacuees, Negroes, Indians, migrants in the United States and war needy overseas. Boxes for Christmas were sent to servicemen in hospitals both at home and overseas. Food, clothing and money have been sent to Greece, China, and India. Communion linen for

chaplains, and also clothing, was made, and knitting for overseas for women and children.⁵⁷

In addition, the revived School of Missions had held its third session at Elon College in 1946, and plans were under way for the fourth during the following summer. Furthermore, the Woman's Convention topped its former historic peak with contributions totalling \$33,-574.59 for the biennium 1945-1947!⁵⁸

Mrs. Oscar H. Paris served as president from 1947 until 1951. Financial contributions continued to rise during her administration and totalled \$35,440.39 for the 1947-1949 biennium and \$36,931.78 for the 1949-1951 biennium. However, it must be realized that these sums represented only the money paid into the Convention treasury and that a Thank Offering was donated annually "over and above the local society's apportionment giving." This special offering was given in 1947 to assist in building a home for the Southern Convention's Superintendent; in 1948, to Relief and Reconstruction; in 1949, to the Han Mei School in Shaowu; and in 1950, to the renovation of Whitely Memorial Auditorium at Elon College. The Life Membership and Memorial Fund was "also over and above the regular giving," and in 1949 was used for Timothy Chang's education in the Duke Divinity School.⁵⁹ In addition to their financial contributions, the various societies gave generously of their time, energies and prayers to various local projects, and these invaluable contributions cannot be measured in dollars and cents.

From 1951 until 1955 Mrs. W. Bernard Williams served the Convention as its president. During her administration the W. W. Staley Memorial Fund of \$7,100 was donated to the endowment fund of Elon College.⁶⁰ Another project was begun which was destined to become an accomplishment of major importance. Mrs. Oma U. Johnson, the librarian of Elon College, addressed the 1952 session of the Southern Convention at length on the subject of the historical records of the Church and apprised the organization of its responsibility to preserve this material. For twenty years historical materials accumulated at Elon College and had been packed away without classification in a vacant space in the College Library known as the Church History Room. Mrs. Johnson appealed to the interest of the delegates in this statement:

The Church History Room, although a prized part of the College Library, should be a great strength and a prized possession of the entire denomination, and especially of the Southern Convention. To become what it should and could, it will be necessary for the Convention to lend its sponsorship and aid.

Immediate Needs—Filing cabinets, book cases and display cases for storage; Lesser items such as folders, envelopes, mending material, catalog material, etc.; a part-time custodian, who

should be a person who is both vitally interested and familiar with the church and Convention. The duties of this person would be to acquire a copy of all publications of the denomination, of the programs of all important church meetings, all printed books and pamphlets about church leaders, watch the newspapers for church items of permanent value, classify and file all material, and prepare a catalog of it.

In its present condition, the material in the Church History Room is not adequately preserved, and in almost no order.⁶¹

Mrs. Johnson's timely plea did not arouse the organization to action, but in 1955 the Woman's Convention voted to designate their funds received from Life Membership and Memorials to be used for a Church History Room at Elon College.⁶² As a result of this action, the Southern Convention of 1956 appointed Mrs. Oma U. Johnson, Mrs. William W. Sellers and Superintendent William T. Scott to work with the women on the project, and the O'Kelly Memorial Foundation was changed to the Historical Society of the Southern Convention to encourage further interest in the Church's history. The Woman's Convention was also requested to continue its financial support to the History Room and agreed to do so under the direction of Mrs. Garland Spratley.⁶³ The committee lost no time in purchasing the equipment needed, and Mrs. Oma U. Johnson became Custodian of the collection. In this way the women were largely responsible for the beautifully furnished Church History Room in the Iris Holt McEwen Library at Elon College, which houses the priceless collection of historical material of the Christian Church and which Mrs. Johnson has efficiently catalogued.

Another significant change that was voted in 1955 was the change of the name, Woman's Missionary Convention, to the Woman's Fellowship of the Southern Convention of Congregational Christian Churches.⁶⁴ This was a most appropriate step since the work of the women had long since become general in the Church program and not specifically confined to missions. Following this change, the Woman's Fellowship became a part of the National Women's Fellowship of the Congregational Christian Church, and Mrs. W. B. Williams served as national president during 1956-1957. Also a feature of the 1955 meeting was the report of \$41,688.92 for the biennial contributions—the largest sum donated up to that time.⁶⁵

In 1955 Mrs. Fletcher C. Lester was elected president and was serving in 1957 at the time of the formation of the United Church of Christ. At that time there were 158 societies with a membership of 6,000. Since its beginning in 1912, the Woman's Convention had raised \$450,000 for the Church in addition to the donation of other financial gifts and countless days of personal service and dedicated interest. Mrs. Lester made an appropriate summary of this work:

Before the merger, missionary interests of the women of the Southern Convention were centered in Japan, Puerto Rico, and the mountain mission work in Carroll County. During the last twenty years the world has become our field.⁶⁶

Such was the case in 1957; the women of the Church were still meeting the challenge, as they had always done.

The financial contribution of the women was of great assistance to the programs of the Church, and the inspiration to the entire membership which resulted from their dedicated efforts was equally valuable. One of their most significant contributions was the inclusion of children from the cradle to adulthood in their program. This participation brought to many youths their first realization that they were a part of the Church organization and led to a deeper denominational loyalty in later years. The Women's work also provided an excellent training ground for administrative leadership, and by 1957 many women held offices and filled responsible positions in the Church in general. The accomplishments of the women in the Christian and Congregational-Christian Churches can hardly be esteemed too highly.

Footnotes

- ¹ Meacham, *Journal*, 1787, 1789.
- ² *Conferences*, 156.
- ³ G. R. Hammond, (ed.), *Album of Christian Ministers, Churches, Lay Workers and Colleges*, (LeGrand, Iowa: Privately Printed, 1915), 106. Hereinafter cited as Hammond, *Album*.
- ⁴ *Christian Messenger*, May 31, 1817.
- ⁵ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 249.
- ⁶ *Palladium*, January 1, 1840.
- ⁷ *Ibid*, May 15 and June 1, 1841.
- ⁸ Kernodle, *Lives of Ministers*, 147.
- ⁹ *Quadrennial 1886*, 141.
- ¹⁰ *Quadrennial 1891*, 231.
- ¹¹ Hammond, *Album*, 122, and *passim*.
- ¹² Mrs. H. Russell Clem, *A History of the First Christian Church*, (Burlington, North Carolina: Privately Printed, 1962), 8. See also, *Annual 1890*, 62.
- ¹³ *Annual 1893*, 76-77.
- ¹⁴ *Annual 1891*, 69.
- ¹⁵ *Annual 1911*, 130.
- ¹⁶ *Annual 1893*, 30.
- ¹⁷ *Annual 1894*, 104; *Annual 1903*, 106-107.
- ¹⁸ *Annual 1919*, 3.
- ¹⁹ *Annual 1907*, 64.
- ²⁰ *Annual 1911*, 25.
- ²¹ *Annual 1911*, 28.
- ²² *Sun*, January 4, 1911.
- ²³ *Annual 1913*, 83.
- ²⁴ *Ibid*, 35.
- ²⁵ *Annual 1912*, 105; *Annual 1913*, 151.
- ²⁶ *Annual 1912*, 92.
- ²⁷ *Annual 1913*, 112.
- ²⁸ *Ibid*, 56.
- ²⁹ *Annual 1914*, 35.
- ³⁰ *Sun*, February 21, 1912.
- ³¹ *Annual 1913*, 14.
- ³² *Record of the Proceedings of the Woman's Mission Board of the Southern Christian Convention 1912-1937*, Church History Room, 7. Hereinafter cited as *Woman's Board*. The original Minutes of the Woman's Mission Board 1937-1957, the Woman's Missionary Convention of the Southern Christian Convention, and the Woman's Missionary Boards of the various Conferences are all in the Church History Room. As all of these proceedings were published in the *Annual*, that publication is also hereinafter cited for reference. In addition, there is a manuscript by Mrs. L. W. Stagg, *Summary of the Proceedings of 1913-1956*, in the Church History Room which is a condensed account of the Woman's Missionary Work in the Christian Church.
- ³³ *Woman's Board*, 12.
- ³⁴ *Ibid*, 15-16.
- ³⁵ *Ibid*, 17.
- ³⁶ *Annual 1915*, 25.
- ³⁷ *Woman's Board*, 23-24.
- ³⁸ *Ibid*, 24.
- ³⁹ *Ibid*, 29.

- ⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 33.
- ⁴¹ *Annual* 1917, 26.
- ⁴² *Annual* 1919, 25.
- ⁴³ *Annual* 1921, 25.
- ⁴⁴ *Annual* 1923, 15.
- ⁴⁵ *Annual* 1925, 34.
- ⁴⁶ *Annual* 1926, 152.
- ⁴⁷ *Annual* 1928, 65; *Annual* 1930, 23.
- ⁴⁸ *Annual* 1932, 21.
- ⁴⁹ *Annual* 1934, 17-18.
- ⁵⁰ *Annual* 1938, 34; *Annual* 1955, 84.
- ⁵¹ *Annual* 1938, 197.
- ⁵² *Annual* 1940, 25; *Annual* 1942, 32.
- ⁵³ *Annual* 1941, 126.
- ⁵⁴ *Annual* 1943, 107, 109.
- ⁵⁵ *Annual* 1946, 39.
- ⁵⁶ *Annual* 1947, 114, 132.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 119.
- ⁵⁸ *Annual* 1948, 24.
- ⁵⁹ *Annual* 1950, 23; *Annual* 1952, 56.
- ⁶⁰ *Annual* 1954, 31.
- ⁶¹ *Annual* 1952, 40-41.
- ⁶² *Annual* 1955, 95.
- ⁶³ *Annual* 1956, 21, 61; *Annual* 1957, 82, 91.
- ⁶⁴ *Annual* 1955, 95.
- ⁶⁵ *Annual* 1957, 83.
- ⁶⁶ *Sun*, April 26, 1956.

Chapter X

Home and Foreign Missions

Until the middle of the nineteenth century the southern Christians had no missionary program. Church extension was encouraged, as evidenced by Zachariah Holloway's work in Georgia, but it was not materially supported to any great extent, if at all. The few ministers like Joseph Thomas and Isaac N. Walter, who made frequent evangelistic tours through the states, acted upon their own initiative and were not ministering under a formal plan for missions. In 1830 the Eastern Virginia Christian Conference appointed Burwell Barrett to serve as an itinerant at large, but his duties were to visit the churches and quarterly meetings more in the capacity of a superintendent than as a missionary. In 1852 the same Conference voted to participate in the founding of a Christian church in Baltimore but took no further action in the field of Missions until several years later.¹

The North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference had no missionary program prior to its 1852 session when E. F. Watson proposed the founding of a Home Missionary Society for "the advancement of the great principles of liberal Christianity." The motion carried, and Thomas J. Fowler, Solomon Apple, L. Farmer, Josiah McCulloch, E. F. Watson, and A. G. Anderson were appointed a committee to plan the organization. The following report was submitted and approved at the same session:

That the time has now arrived for us as a denomination to take some prominent and decisive action in favor of the missionary cause; That before the adjournment of this Conference such action should be taken, and that something like the following plan is recommended by the committee to be adopted.

Let a committee of five be appointed by this Conference, to transact such business and under such organization, as to them

may appear proper for the getting up and promoting the missionary cause; and that said committee report to the next Annual Conference, for the further maturing said organization, and a more extended action and they would recommend the passage of said resolution by Conference.

Resolved, That each local and itinerant minister of this Conference bring the subject of missions before their respective Churches, on suitable occasions, at least once a year or oftener and solicit subscriptions for the same.

The following persons were elected to draft a Constitution and by-laws to carry out the object of the foregoing resolution: To wit. C. F. Faucett, A. G. Anderson, E. F. Watson, Alfred Iseley and J. R. Holt.²

The constitution of the Home Missionary Society drawn up by this committee was adopted by the Conference at its 1853 session, "after which an effort was made to get members and raise funds."³

Evidently the Society was organized immediately, although no record has been found of its activities prior to its meeting at Bethlehem Church, Alamance County, North Carolina, on October 24, 1857. Probably no previous minutes had been kept, as one item of business transacted was the motion directing the Secretary and Treasurer to obtain books in which to record the proceedings. Elder B. N. Hopkins presided over the meeting at which the following new officers were elected: A. G. Anderson, president; E. F. Watson, vice president; James A. Turrentine, secretary; and Josiah McCully, treasurer. The Executive Committee was composed of George G. Walker, Alfred Iseley, John Faucette, P. R. Harden, and E. F. Watson; while Thomas J. Fowler, A. Moring, J. I. Hobby, H. G. Hayes, B. N. Hopkins, M. Staley, B. Stroud, A. Apple, R. D. Jones, J. W. Hatch, R. G. Tinnen, and P. M. Tuck were chosen Directors.

The Society had accumulated \$306.55 in the treasury previously, to which \$63.44 was added at the meeting, making a total of \$369.99 on hand. These funds enabled the organization to move "That the Executive Committee be required to employ a Missionary to preach at some of the destitute churches, and that Wilmington be recommended to their consideration." Another item of business was the passage of resolutions of respect in memory of two deceased members of the Society, Bingham Apple and Robert M. Foust.⁴

At the 1858 meeting held at Pope's Chapel, Granville County, North Carolina, the treasurer reported collections for the year of \$152.98, with expenditures of \$98.32, leaving a balance on hand of \$516.89. A committee was appointed "to consider the propriety of the union of the Society with the Southern Home Missionary Society, and report at the next meeting," but, inasmuch as the minutes of the 1859 session have not been found, the result of this motion is unknown.⁵ In 1860 the Society met at Pleasant Hill, Chatham County, North Caro-

lina, and voted to continue its aid to the Newbern (New Bern) Church. Pledges were taken at this meeting to raise additional funds.⁶

During the first several years of its existence the Society failed to promote missionary enterprises extensively, which prompted the Home Missions Committee of the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference to report in 1862:

We conceive that no means are better calculated to unite the different sections of the country, and bring the isolated and less favored parts of our land under religious influence than Home Missions; but we are sorry to say that the activity and zeal of the Denomination, in this matter, has not been equal to the great end desired. We find that the efforts on the part of the ministers and church to raise a fund sufficient to conduct a Home Mission successfully, have been very weak.⁷

The distractions of the Civil War undoubtedly hindered the Christians in their missionary efforts, but a revival of enthusiasm occurred at the 1864 meeting of the Society. J. N. Manning "appealed to the congregation in a very happy effort, and about one thousand dollars was given as a donation to the enterprise." This fund was immediately employed to send J. R. Holt as a missionary to the army.⁸ Unfortunately, the outcome of the War thwarted the program, for the 1865 Minutes state: "The greater portion of the funds of the Society were lost, having been collected in what proved to be a worthless currency."⁹ This proved to be a death blow to the organization but not to the cause of Home Missions in the Church. In 1866 the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference took over the books and records of the Society and incorporated its program in the work of the Conference Committee on Home Missions.¹⁰ Under one executive authority instead of two the efficiency of the missionary effort improved.

In 1859 the Eastern Virginia Conference appointed a committee composed of I. W. Duck, J. A. Costen, H. Rawls, R. W. Coker, J. H. Daughtrey, J. R. Lee, A. L. Hill, E. Vanderbury, W. P. Sparrow, J. D. Presson, and T. W. Joiner to report on "the propriety of establishing a Home Missionary Society." The committee deliberated and before the session adjourned recommended the formation of a society to be financed by contributions of \$1.00 per member of the respective churches. The report was concluded with this statement:

RESOLVED, that this Conference appoint a Committee of one from each church to bring this subject before their respective churches and urge its importance, collect the funds, and send it to the next Conference.¹¹

As the Conference records are missing for the decade following the 1859 session, the results of this action are unknown.

The few Church records that have survived prior to 1870 contain no information concerning missionary programs in conferences other than the two discussed. If any existed, they were probably similar to those of the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference, which consisted almost entirely of an attempt to supply ministers for weak churches and to support itinerant preachers.¹² The organization of the Southern Christian Convention promised an expansion of the missionary program, for at its first meeting in 1856 that organization proposed:

The Convention shall take under its supervision, all the general enterprises of the denomination, South; shall devise plans for institutions of learning, for the publication of a Southern periodical, and the establishment of a Southern Book Concern, and a General Missionary Society.¹³

At its 1858 session Alfred Iseley, W. B. Wellons, S. S. Barrett, William N. Bragg, and Jubilee Smith were appointed to serve as a committee to draft a plan for the Society.¹⁴ The results were the organization of the Southern Home Missionary Society and all conferences composing the Convention were invited to merge their missionary societies with it. Prospects appeared excellent for the Society's progress in the mission field, for, according to Morrill, "Its scope was, generally speaking, all territory embraced by the Convention, with strong men of that body . . . connected with it." However, continued Morrill, "That Society's records are meager, and give little idea what enterprises were undertaken."¹⁵ The outbreak of the Civil War forced the suspension of the Convention for many years, and it presumably thwarted the program of the Missionary Society, causing the latter eventually to cease to exist. There is no extant record known of any missionary activity of the Christians other than the efforts of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference until the Southern Christian Convention was revived.

A Standing Committee on Home Missions consisting of Solomon Apple, J. W. Wellons and W. S. Long was appointed by the Southern Convention at its 1867 Extraordinary Session.¹⁶ The following year the committee reported to the regular Convention session at Mt. Auburn:

In view of the fact that there is a great need of funds to carry forward the missionary work of the Church, we recommend the following plan, to be adopted by the several Conferences, to wit:

That each Conference be requested to organize a Missionary Society, and that they also request the various churches to organize auxiliary societies, with the special view of embracing our entire membership in these organizations, and thus train up our people to systematic benevolence.¹⁷

The aim of this plan was to provide more ministers who would organize new churches and strengthen weak ones, because the filling of this need composed the entire Home Mission program of the southern Christians at the time. The plan was put in operation, but its progress was slow at first, according to the report given to the Convention at its 1874 session:

Your Committee on Home Missions would report: That they have been able to accomplish but little, no funds having been placed at their command, and all our efficient ministers being employed in the pastoral work.

The moral condition of our Churches is good. Order and system is being more successfully introduced, from year to year in our local churches, and in our annual Conferences, and the relations between the pastors and the churches, are becoming more permanent, and more efficient.¹⁸

The Committee then recommended that a church be allowed to keep a pastor as long as the appointment was mutually agreeable, instead of having one elected annually or depending upon the Conference to provide one. Weaker churches were urged to unite with others "located at a convenient distance" to call a minister and then divide his services among their congregations. The adoption of this proposal was the real beginning in the southern Church of congregational election of pastors to serve their churches for an indefinite period. This method of securing ministers by churches financially able to support them became a general practice after the 1874 Convention.

The report was concluded with the statement:

Your Committee see opened before us, a large field of usefulness, if we had the means and the men at our command to at once occupy these fields, but until we acquire more strength and more means, we must be content to do little, where much might be done.¹⁹

In these words the Home Mission problem of the southern Christian Church was summarized accurately. The field was more extensive than their ministerial supply, and the Convention Committee could do little more than encourage and assist the Conference in promoting the cause. The 1878 Convention was so informed by the Committee's report:

The Home Mission Committee of each Conference should assist the ministers and districts in arranging their work, provided the matter has not been previously arranged by the ministers and churches for themselves.

We recommend the appointment of an evangelist by the Convention, to travel throughout the bounds of the Convention, to aid pastors and missionaries in conducting their protracted meetings and to conduct meetings elsewhere, as circumstances favor, believing that much might be accomplished by such an appointment.²⁰

In response to this proposal the Convention assigned J. W. Wellons to serve as its evangelist.

Wellons energetically plunged into his new duties and largely because of his efforts the Committee on Home Missions was able to inform the 1882 Convention that the Eastern Virginia Conference had a missionary serving "part of his time" in the field. The Valley Virginia Conference had organized a Missionary Society and had a full time missionary at work, while mission work had begun in the Deep River Valley Conference. The North Carolina and Virginia Conference was concentrating on its mission program more "than at any time in our past history." The report further stated:

The Children's Mission Band, that was organized last year with their headquarters at Raleigh, is doing a good work, although in the infancy of its organization. They have two missionaries in the field, one devoting all his time and the other part of his time to the work, with the prospect of soon having the third man in the field.²¹

Despite this encouraging progress, more manpower was desperately needed, as "The fields are white unto the harvest, and we should endeavor to thrust in the sycle and reap."²²

The next significant development of the Missions program in the southern Church originated at the 1883 session of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference, which met at Poplar Branch Church in Moore County, North Carolina. At the insistence of Peter Thomas Klapp, the Conference appointed a committee to study the subject of Foreign Missions. The committee, composed of P. T. Klapp, David F. Jones, S. B. Klapp, J. A. Jones, J. D. Wicker, and W. T. Herndon, made the following report which was adopted:

WHEREAS, the cause of Foreign Missions is a work of such great magnitude that it demands the co-operation of the various branches of the Christian Church; therefore we recommend the following resolutions:

1. That our ministers be authorized to raise funds for Foreign Missions in or before the month of April and pay the same to the Treasurer of Conference to be used for the above purpose; and that a continued effort be made by us as a conference and people to raise funds for the aforesaid object.

2. That a committee on Foreign Missions be appointed by this Conference, and that this committee be authorized to correspond with the Secretary of Missions in the Christian Church North, with the view of uniting our efforts and sending out one or two missionaries as soon as possible.²³

In concurrence with the proposal, P. T. Klapp, M. L. Winston, J. W. Wellons, W. T. Herndon, and Alfred Moring were appointed to serve as the Conference Committee. This action constituted the first recorded move found of any organization of the southern Christian

Church in the cause of Foreign Missions. Credit for its instigation belongs to P. T. Klapp, who has been justly accorded "the proud distinction of being the father of the Foreign Mission work in the Christian Church." A few months before the Conference met Klapp had an interesting experience at Moore Union Church in Moore County, North Carolina. At the conclusion of a sermon on the condition of "the Cannibals" a man named R. Womack said to him, "If your statement is true, I must help, I have but 35 cents—take it and use it to aid in sending the gospel to that benighted people."²⁴ This "Mite" is the first known financial contribution to Foreign Missions made in the southern Church, and the zealous Klapp accepted it and the challenge that accompanied the contribution. Foreign Missions constituted the primary concern of the minister for a number of years after this event, although his interest waned during the latter part of his ministry.

The newly created Committee, faced with a discouraging amount of indifference, diligently began its promotional work and reported to the Conference in 1884:

WHEREAS, The cause of Foreign Missions is a work of so much importance, and

WHEREAS, We as a denomination have been so slow to carry out the full commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and as our people are not united upon the importance of this work, we would recommend,

1st. That each minister of the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference be *required* to bring this subject before each of his congregations and show them the importance of accumulating a fund for a work in foreign lands, viz.: Mexico, South America, Africa, India, Japan, Corea [Korea] and China. Each of the above countries are occupied (except Corea) by Missionaries from other denominations, *but none from ours.*²⁵

A total of \$134.46 was collected the first year, hardly an impressive sum, and the Committee proposed to increase it by having each minister "required" to raise a minimum of three cents per member during the following year. The conference was also requested to appoint a Foreign Missions Committee annually and to ask the Southern Christian Convention to establish a Foreign Missions Board.²⁶

In response to this request the Southern Convention at its 1886 session authorized the creation of a Board of Foreign Missions, composed of three elders and two laymen, to "take full charge of this department of the Christian church."²⁷ The new agency met in November of that year and elected P. T. Klapp, president; W. G. Clements, secretary; M. J. W. White, corresponding secretary; and W. T. Herndon, treasurer. The North Carolina and Virginia Conference contributed \$1,079.40 to the Committee treasury and the Eastern Vir-

ginia Conference raised \$173.96,²⁸ which was encouraging, but the funds were still insufficient for the Committee's plans. At this time Klapp attracted the interest of Josiah Prescott Watson, Secretary of the Missions Department of the American Christian Convention, who suggested joining forces in the enterprise. This pooling of resources enabled David F. Jones, accompanied by his wife, Amelia, to sail from New York in January 1887 as the first missionary to Japan from the "Christian Church in the United States and Canada."²⁹ In the spring of that year the Jones family settled at the fishing town of Ishinomaki on the coast near Sendai. A church building was erected and dedicated in February 1888; shortly afterward a parsonage was built beside it. The total cost of both buildings was approximately \$125. Toshio Ohta was the first Japanese convert, and Sichi Watanobe the first Japanese pastor ordained by the mission. Within two years the membership of the church numbered twenty-three, and the Foreign Missions program of the Christian Church had become a reality.³⁰

The work in Japan was further encouraged by the information from David F. Jones "that the government and doctrines of the Christian Church are peculiarly suited to the wants of that people."³¹ There was concrete evidence to support this statement in the case of Yoshito Tsuda and his wife Takeko. Originally converted to Christianity under the Roman Catholic faith, the couple was attracted by Jones's efforts and joined the Christian Church in 1887. They became zealous missionaries and were placed in charge of the work at Ichinomaki (Ishinomaki), Japan.³²

In 1889 Harry J. Rhodes, accompanied by his family, joined Jones as the second missionary to Japan from the Christian Church. Both Jones and Rhodes were natives of England but had been educated in the United States. Jones was a graduate of Graham College, and Rhodes had attended the Theological Seminary at Standfordville, New York.³³ Service in a foreign country was comprehended above the provincial level by both men because of their Anglo-American backgrounds. This proved to be an asset in their missionary endeavors; consequently, they made rapid progress in Japan. In 1895 the following results were reported to the Convention:

Our statistics show an increasing degree of prosperity in the Japan Mission and that our dear missionaries are faithful in their work. The statistics of our Japan mission for the year ending October 1, 1895 are as follows: 12 missionaries; five of which are Americans; two men and three ladies, and seven natives, two ordained and five unordained; 19 native helpers; four organized churches; two stations; five out stations; 33 additions up to last October, up to the same date losses 18; present membership 240; 10 Sabbath schools with 396 scholars; one theological school with seven pu-

pils; three day schools with 80 pupils. A good building has been purchased in Tokio and paid for, large enough to accommodate one missionary family, the theological and training school, with some other rooms which may be used for Bible women. The funds with which this building was purchased was given by the Rhode Island and Massachusetts Conference, and one handsome church building has been erected in Oji Japan.³⁴

The encouraging progress made in Japan had the effect of accelerating the Home Missions program. In order to facilitate fund raising and campaigning for both projects, the Southern Christian Convention in 1890 created the Missionary Convention to meet annually for the following purpose:

. . . to develop the strength and activity of the Conferences in the enterprises of the denomination, and to combine their means and energies for the spread of the gospel among men through the agencies of Education, Missions, Home and Foreign, Church Extension, Religious Literature and Colportage and Sunday Schools.³⁵

This consolidation of Convention agencies was an intelligent move toward the prevention of overlapping functions, duplication of effort, and checking the possible development of an unwieldy bureaucracy, but it failed in the area of Missions. One of the reasons was the keen interest in these causes apart from the other activities of the Church. Morrill wrote, "It would be difficult to find a people who have more persistently planted new churches and spread into new territory."³⁶ Furthermore, as the Foreign Missions enterprise was shared jointly with the American Christian Convention, it could not be combined easily into one supervisory agency for all southern Church activities. For these reasons the Committee on Revision requested the Convention in 1892 to adopt the following plan:

That authority be given by this Convention for the organization of what shall be known as "The Christian Missionary Association," to be composed of delegates from Christian Conferences, Churches Sunday Schools, Missionary societies or individual members within the Christian Church on a basis of one delegate for every ten dollars actually paid into the treasury of the said Association until otherwise provided by its rules and regulations . . . The purpose of the Christian Missionary Association shall be to develop the strength and activity of the Conferences in the enterprise of "Missions," and to combine their means and energies for the spread of the gospel among men through the agency of "Missions."³⁷

Control and direction of the Missions program of the Church remained with the Home and Foreign Missions Boards of the Convention. The task of the Association was to arouse the interest and support of every member of the Christian Church in the program by means of study courses, lectures, sermons, and the distribution of appropriate litera-

ture. The Association also served as an agency through which contributions could be made directly to Missions without involvement in other Church activities, and thereby hopefully appeal to prospective donors. Evidence of the feasibility of the new organization was indicated when the 1894 Convention was informed by M. L. Hurley, the Association's financial secretary, that \$1,800 had been paid into the treasury.³⁸

The first complete Minutes of the meetings of the Association are those of the fourth annual session at Suffolk, Virginia, in December 1895. The officials at that time were:

N. G. Newman, President
 W. T. Herndon, Vice President and Mission Secretary
 A. Savage, Secretary
 T. R. Gaskins, Treasurer
 N. G. Newman, J. E. West and E. E. Holland, Executive Committee

Standing Committees:

Missionary Literature: E. L. Moffitt, J. O. Atkinson, W. J. Laine
 Programme for Annual Meetings: N. G. Newman, J. W. Rawls,
 S. B. Klapp
 Mission Fields: W. S. Long, W. T. Herndon, J. P. Barrett

A Constitution was adopted at this meeting which included the provision that any person or organization could become a member of the Association upon the payment of \$10.00, "provided that ladies shall be admitted with a half vote for \$5.00 when representing themselves."³⁹

Although the Constitution did not confine the activities of the Association to Home Missions, it was to this field, and especially church extension, that almost all of its activities were directed. W. T. Herndon was elected in 1897 to serve full time as a traveling missionary at an annual salary of \$720, and he filled this post until 1900. In the same year J. Pressley Barrett began the publication of a column devoted to Missions in the *Christian Sun*.⁴⁰ In the years between 1900 and 1908 the Association aided ministers in organizing congregations and erecting churches. Among these men were W. C. Wicker, N. G. Newman, M. W. Butler, and B. F. Black, who were assigned to the church at Newport News, Virginia; and C. C. Jones, L. L. Lassiter, and William T. Walters, who worked in the Shenandoah Valley. Financial assistance was sent as far as Columbus, Georgia, to help H. W. Elder build a church.⁴¹ The Association made a worthy contribution to Christian Home Missions. The leaders of the organization apparently labored sincerely to expand the program, but despite its auspicious beginning the funds raised were never very large and always insufficient for their plans. The funds raised for the biennium 1903-1904 totalled only \$1,491.23, and this did not go far in sup-

porting a missionary enterprise. The Association never achieved the results its creators hoped that it would, and in 1908 it was reorganized as the Christian Missionary Association of the Eastern Virginia Conference and continued to function as such for a number of years.⁴²

While the Christian Missionary Association was in existence and afterward home mission work continued to be an important item on the programs of the individual conferences. H. W. Elder and his associates founded new churches within the Georgia and Alabama Conference. The organization of the Missionary Association of the Alabama Conference in 1901 enabled J. W. Elder, George D. Hunt, and others to establish new churches in Alabama. Leñneous I. Cox served as a part time home missionary for the North Carolina and Virginia Conference during the period from 1908 until 1918, and established a number of new churches in the North Carolina Piedmont. In the Virginia Valley Central Christian conference, A. W. Andes, J. W. Dofflemeyer, R. L. Williamson, and others were engaged in the missionary endeavor. There were numerous participants in home mission work in the various areas from time to time, in addition to those mentioned here. All of these conference activities contributed to the growth of the Church and were evidence that the Christians were aware of the importance of a missionary program.⁴³

The progress of the southern Christians in the field of Foreign Missions was much greater than in Home Missions because the former was a joint enterprise of the Southern Convention and the American Christian Convention. This clearly indicates the strength that lies in unity. Having organized the Japanese mission successfully, David F. Jones moved on to China in 1893 where his work was interrupted by the Boxer Rebellion. The Rhodes family was forced to return to the United States because of ill health, but others replaced them in the service. Miss Christine Penrod, accompanied by A. D. Woodworth and his wife, entered the field in 1893, followed within two years by E. C. Fry, his wife, and Miss Sarah V. Gullett.⁴⁴ Failing health forced the Woodworths to return home, but they were replaced by the E. K. McCords and Miss Alice M. True. Clark P. Garman and his wife arrived in Japan in 1906. Saburo Koshiba, converted by the mission, came to the United States for his education, then returned to assist in enlarging the Tokyo Bible Training School in the Tokyo Christian Theological School. Mrs. Mina Kitamura, also educated in America, rendered a valuable service in conducting a school for girls, and there were many other Japanese teachers and workers whose names cannot be mentioned because of incomplete records.⁴⁵ Under these dedicated Christians the work progressed to the point that the following statistics could be presented to the Southern Convention in 1906:

Missionaries	8
Bible Women	4
Churches	8
Outposts	21
Japanese ordained ministers	7
Other native helpers	8
Stations	4
Church members	513 ⁴⁶

In 1894, under the auspices of the American Christian Convention, J. G. Bishop began the publication of *The Christian Missionary*, a sixteen-page periodical devoted to news of Missions. Its perusal and support were heartily recommended by the Southern Convention to its membership. Nicholas Summerbell was sent as delegate from the Christian Church to the first world-wide missionary Congress in London in 1888, "and thus the denominational missionary enterprise became linked with the great world of missions."⁴⁷

In the years of the twentieth century M. G. Alexanian attempted to persuade the Christians to establish a mission in his native Armenia, but this was rejected at the time in favor of a project in Puerto (Porto) Rico. The island had been controlled by the United States since 1899, and the time was ripe for the entrance of missionaries. H. J. Rhodes volunteered to assist in organizing the field and landed in San Juan on January 17, 1901, accompanied by D. Palmer Barrett and his wife Eva O. Barrett. At the end of the first year they were joined by Thomas E. White and Miss Jennie Mishler.⁴⁸ Locating in Ponce on the south side of the island, a church was organized in 1903 with five charter members. Rafael Hernandez, one of these, eventually became an ordained minister and subsequently pastor of the church. Within a few years there were churches at Arus, Santa Isabel, Jauca, and Salinas, in addition to Ponce; and work was carried on in five outposts. This growth necessitated the organization of a conference on February 27, 1906, at which Esteban Martinez and Rafael Hernandez were licensed to preach.

Between 1908 and 1914 W. C. McCloud and his wife and Misses Ethel Culver and Olive G. Williams joined the mission. Miss Williams was supported during the entire decade of her residence by the Third Christian Church (later the Christian Temple) of Norfolk, Virginia. Miss Micaela Reyes and Juan Romero were native assistants who rendered valuable service. A new church was organized at Arus Playita and membership grew. The Christians also participated in organizing the Evangelical Union of Porto Rico, which eventually founded Union Theological Seminary, among other beneficial activities.

During the decade after 1915 R. Sandoval, M. E. Martinez, Dona Delfino Zayas, Miss Caledonia Vasquez, and a man named Ojeda became participants in the work. Victor Rivera attended Elon College



The committee, appointed by the convention, which selected the site of Elon College. Left to right: Col. J. H. Harden, Dr. G. S. Watson, Dr. W. S. Long, Dr. J. P. Barrett and Dr. J. W. Wellons



Main Building—Elon College before 1923



*Suffolk Collegiate Institute
Suffolk, Virginia 1872-1890*



Mrs. Oma U. Johnson, Dr. William T. Scott, in the Church History Room at Elon College



*Elon Home for
Children*

*Moonelon Confer-
ence Center*



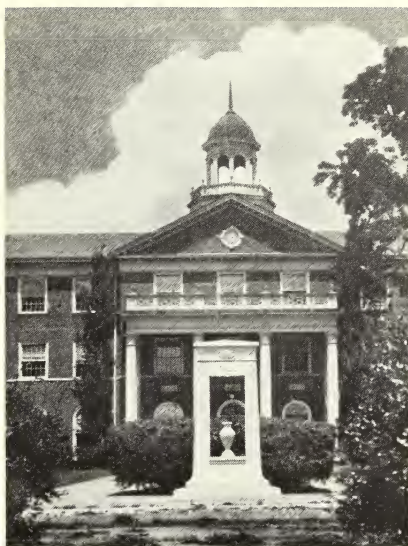
*Christian Publishing
House at Elon College*

Franklinton Institute

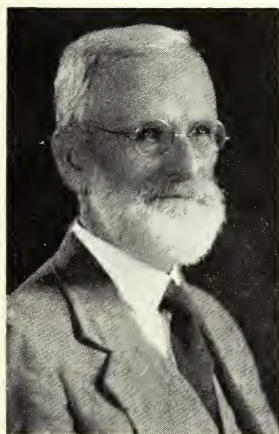




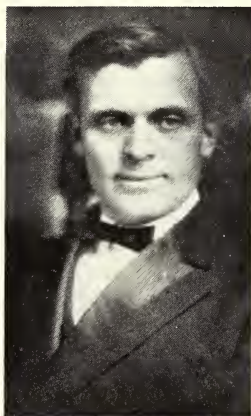
*O'Kelly chapel Christian Church
Chatham County, North Carolina*



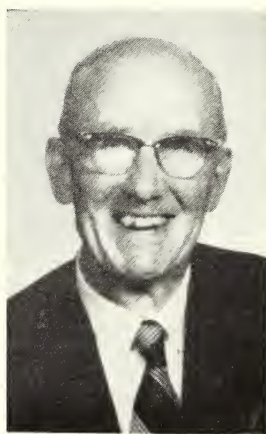
*O'Kelly Monument
Elon College, North Carolina*



*Dr. J. U. Newman
Prof. of Biblical Literature*



*Dr. J. O. Atkinson
Prof. of Philosophy*



*Rev. F. C. Lester
Ed. Christian Sun*



John Galloway Truitt



W. Millard Stevens



Jesse H. Dollar



Martin T. Garren



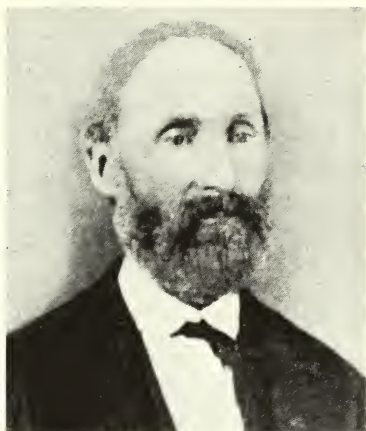
George D. Alley



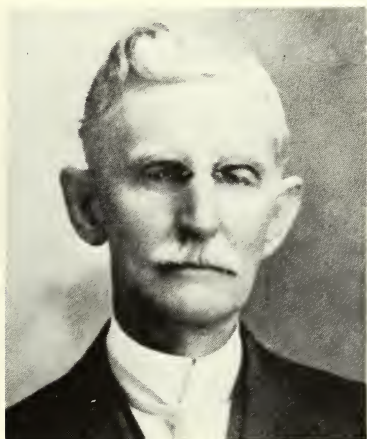
Joe A. French



William Brock Wellons



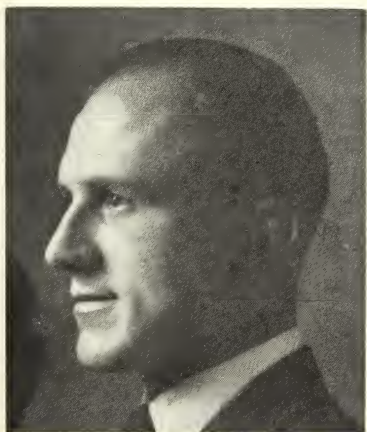
Solomon Apple



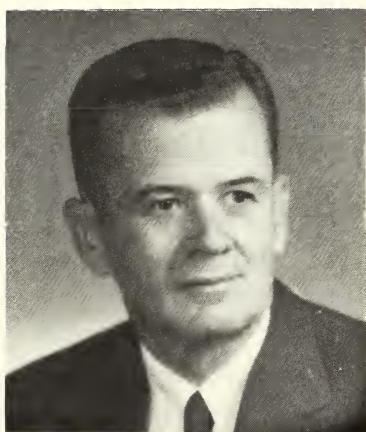
Patrick Henry Fleming



Stanley C. Harrell



H. S. Hardcastle



William E. Wissemian



Dr. W. S. Long



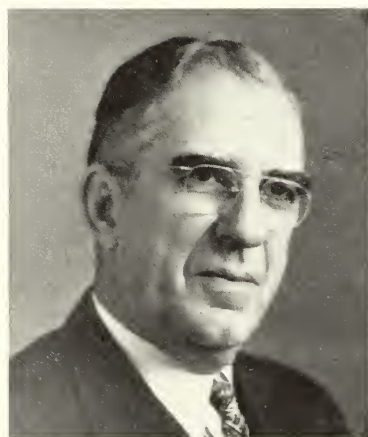
Dr. W. W. Staley



Dr. E. L. Moffitt



Dr. W. A. Harper



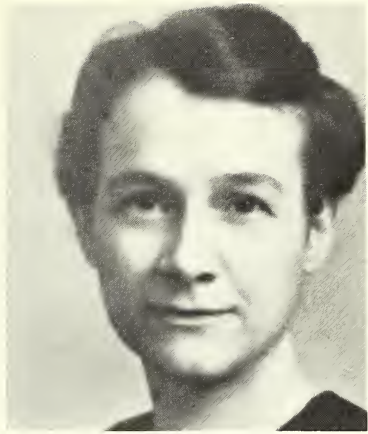
Dr. L. E. Smith



Dr. J. E. Danieleley



Mrs. J. Monroe Harris



Mrs. William E. Wisseman



Mrs. Oscar H. Paris



Mrs. W. Bernard Williams



Mrs. F. C. Lester



Mrs. Ray F. Gordon



Mrs. Charles H. Rowland



Mrs. Estelle H. Treat



Mrs. W. H. Carroll



Mrs. John A. Williams



Mrs. Walter R. Sellars



Mrs. John G. Truitt

and returned to his homeland as a teacher after his graduation. Juan Monita, Juan Garcia, and Manuel Rodriguez attended Defiance College and returned to Puerto Rico where two served in missionary work and one in the commercial field. As illness and death occasionally thinned the ranks of the corps, others were sent to take their places. These included Penn G. Snyder and his wife, the former Amy Ruse; W. H. Martin, his wife and son Paul; and Bruce W. Morton and his wife, the former Esther O. Brownsberger. Miss Rosina Lawrence assisted as a teacher in 1923, and the following year both Rivera and Ojeda were ordained into the ministry, which was a decided advantage to the work.⁴⁹

While the growth of the Puerto Rican mission was encouraging from its beginning, the missionaries had to surmount the problems caused by drought, hurricanes, earthquakes, illness, and World War I. The storms caused severe losses in buildings and equipment and wrought extensive damage to the economy of the natives of the island. Funds were never plentiful, and the corps of workers, though dedicated, was small; but day schools kindergartens, Sunday Schools, Christian Endeavor Societies, Daily Vacation Bible Schools, and a medical dispensary were conducted, in addition to the regular church program. In 1921, when J. O. Atkinson, Secretary of the Mission Board of the Southern Christian Convention, and Wilson P. Minton, Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the American Christian Convention, made a joint inspection visit to the field, they were pleased with the expanding program. In 1925 Secretary Minton issued the following comparative report:

	1905	1925
Missionaries	4	4
National Workers	3	8
Organized Churches	5	6
Outposts	17	12
Kindergartens	0	2
Daily Vacation Bible Schools	0	3
Church Members	82	340
Sunday-school enrollment	320	920
Christian Endeavor enrollment	0	236
Industrial Work	0	3
Total Money Raised by Churches	\$74.50	\$1,170.83
Paid on Pastor's Salaries by National Church	0	\$507.00
Appropriations for Year	\$4,000.00	\$13,896.00
Property Valuation	0	\$50,000.00 ⁵⁰

In 1905 any place where services had been held in a rented building or in the open air was counted as an Outpost. In 1925 only places where services were held regularly in rented halls were counted as Outposts. These statistics need no further comment to prove the progress of the Christian Church in Puerto Rico.

The success of the Foreign Mission Board served as impetus to the efforts of the Convention's Home Missions Committee to accelerate its program by organizational improvement. The concurrence of the Convention was obtained and the status of the Committee was changed to that of a Board in 1906. Three years later J. O. Atkinson was elected Secretary of the Board, without salary, and began the Missions supervisory work that he continued as long as he lived.⁵¹ Further advancement was made on September 28, 1912, when the Board was incorporated under the laws of North Carolina by J. E. West, K. B. Johnson, J. W. Holt, W. H. Elder, and J. O. Atkinson. The officials elected were J. E. West, Chairman; J. W. Holt, Vice Chairman; and J. O. Atkinson, Secretary-Treasurer. The home office of the corporation was located in Elon College.⁵²

Both Mission Boards had repeatedly requested the services of a full-time secretary, and in 1914 the convention responded by electing C. H. Rowland to the office of Field Mission Secretary. Two years later he was succeeded by J. O. Atkinson at an annual salary of \$1,800, plus expenses, "including a typewriter."⁵³ In 1917 the two Boards were combined by corporate charter amendment into the Mission Board of the Southern Christian Convention. All funds collected by the new central agency were to be divided between the Home and Foreign Mission fields after the operating expenses of the Board had been deducted.⁵⁴

Atkinson began his work as Secretary of the new organization in September 1917, and in the same month received a challenge from J. M. Darden of Suffolk, Virginia, who offered a contribution of \$5,000 on condition that the Board raise \$95,000 by January 1, 1919, and divide the resultant \$100,000 equally between Home and Foreign Missions. Encouraging progress toward this goal was reported in April 1918 when subscriptions totalled \$65,666.00 and collections \$7,616.50.⁵⁵ Further significant financial assistance was obtained from the Men and Millions Movement when it began in 1920, and the Board was able to increase its assistance to struggling churches in North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, and Alabama. It also urged the Convention to establish a theological department for ministers' training at Elon College and recommended a \$1500 minimum annual salary for a married minister and \$1200 for a minister without a wife.⁵⁶

Acting upon instructions from the Convention, the Board organized a Department of Evangelism on January 1, 1920, with C. H. Rowland and J. A. Williams serving as the Committee on Evangelism and A. Victor Lightbourne as the Evangelist.⁵⁷ Lightbourne was not only an effective preacher, but was also a talented violinist, and his musical renditions added to the appeal of his sermons. By Septem-

ber 15, 1921, 492 conversions and 242 new members were reported; but there was also a financial deficit of \$2,798.93, and the employment of an evangelist was discontinued.⁵⁸ Although the effort to create a separate department for Evangelism failed, the Convention continued to appoint a Committee on Evangelism to promote this work, but it functioned separately and apart from the Mission Board.

During 1920 the Board authorized Miss Iola Hedgepeth to open a school in the mountains of Virginia near Hillsville in Carroll County. Teaching began in "a very inadequate and dilapidated building," but Miss Hedgepeth soon had eighty pupils enrolled and was assisted by Miss Emily Midyett, who was supported by the Norfolk Christian Temple. As a result of this encouraging beginning, a committee composed of Secretary Atkinson, Convention President W. W. Staley, and Superintendent of Young Peoples' Work, Bessie I. Holt (later Mrs. H. Russell Clem) visited the area and purchased a site at Fancy Gap for the school. Seventeen acres were bought for \$491.00, and an additional acre was donated by G. Washington Edwards. A combination home and school was built for \$3,207.74, and the mission post was thus equipped for effective day school, Sunday School and church work.⁵⁹ The growth of the project was consistent, and during the period from 1924 to 1948 Misses Rigney, Margaret H. Morey and Alice Baldwin; M. T. Sorrell and his wife; E. S. Madren, R. T. Grissom and his wife; and Allen Gleason, Jr., and his wife were among those engaged at various times in the work.⁶⁰ Eventually, a church was built at nearby Elk Spur, and its pastors included O. A. Elmore and B. J. Earp. Miss Hedgepeth married J. A. Meredith of Elk Spur, and their home became a permanent Christian influence in the community. Their son, Jesse Meredith, is a prominent surgeon and an active layman of the Church in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, today.

One especially noteworthy result of the Fancy Gap School was the dedication of her life to missionary work by Victoria Edwards, daughter of the G. W. Edwards who donated land for the school's site. One of the first pupils of Miss Hedgepeth, Victoria was a superior student and prepared herself for a higher education than could be obtained at home. Her ambition was to become a teacher and work to uplift the people of her beloved mountains to the Christian way of life. To educate herself for this service she went to Burlington, North Carolina, where she enrolled in the high school of that city and supported herself by services performed in a private home.⁶¹ She later went to school near Windsor, Virginia, but overwork caused her frail constitution to break down and she fought a losing battle with tuberculosis until her death in 1938. Thwarted in her ambition to be a teacher, Victoria cheerfully used her waning strength during the years she was a

semi-invalid to promote the church and Sunday School among her mountain neighbors and became a source of Christian inspiration to the entire community. She enjoyed sending the missionary news to the *Christian Sun*. In letters which she signed "Victoria of the Hills," she wrote in her own poetic fashion:

I am looking forward to lilac time and smooth roads, then we can organize some Christian Endeavor and Missionary Societies up here. Our pastor has said we could and have things like other churches. So when the sweet perfume of lilacs is wafted down to you from our hills this year, I hope we will be more like your churches out there in the world that I view from the gap in the mountains.⁶²

When news of her death reached Secretary Atkinson, he wrote: "The highest tribute her church and Sunday school can pay to her memory is to see to it that the work she did there shall not be in vain, and the life she lived shall not be fruitless in the years that are to come."⁶³ It was not in vain, for the life of Victoria Edwards is still a Christian inspiration to all who knew her.

The work at Fancy Gap in 1938 had grown to include a parsonage or teacherage and three churches whose membership totalled 166, with 260 enrolled in their Sunday Schools. Day schools were conducted in several communities which had no such advantage before the Christians entered the field.⁶⁴ Within the next decade the expansion of state school programs eventually provided all the facilities necessary for secular education, and after 1948 the mountain mission work was gradually assumed by the churches established in the area.

In addition to this particular phase of the Mission Board's work, many churches in the denomination were aided financially in their building programs and in obtaining pastoral services. During the 1920s negotiations were concluded with the Home Mission Department of the American Christian Convention for a cooperative effort, which increased the potentiality of the Southern Convention's Board. After the merger with the Congregational Church in 1931, the scope of activity was enlarged to an even greater extent; but the list of individual churches added is too lengthy to be given here. Home Missions were not neglected, and they advanced as fast as contributions paid in would allow.

The Board reported in 1924 that the Sunday School of the First Christian Church in Burlington, North Carolina, had assumed the responsibility for the \$1,000 annually necessary to support Miss Martha Stacy in Japan. The Norfolk Christian Temple contributed \$15 monthly to employ Mrs. Toshio Ohta in the same work. Within a few years L. C. Fletcher and his wife, William Q. McKnight and his wife, and Miss Angie Crew were added to the corps. In 1930 the mission in-

cluded 14 native pastors, 16 kindergarten teachers, 12 national workers, 16 organized churches with a membership of 1,966 and 23 Sunday Schools with an enrollment of 1,629. The Board also reported that Miss Victoria Adams had joined the Puerto Rican staff and M.J.W. White, Jr. and his wife had begun missionary work in the Philippines.⁶⁵

In 1930 the Mission Board reported to the Southern Convention:

By agreement and merger in our foreign work with the Congregationalists, we are to have a part in the work of foreign missions in Japan, Africa, China, India, Greece, Turkey and the Philippines; and, through our Foreign Board, are to have a voice in the administration of missions in these fields. The Congregationalists merged with us in the work in missions in Japan and Porto Rico, thus becoming one in the work of building up the kingdom to the uttermost parts.⁶⁶

In 1932 the merged mission work was placed under the administrative jurisdiction of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. This Board, then in its 121st year of operation, was the Missionary Department of the Congregational Church in the United States, with its headquarters in Boston, Massachusetts. The new arrangement provided a greater range for missionary enterprises than the Christians had ever commanded previously, which was encouraging to the southern Church. J. O. Atkinson represented the Southern Convention on this Board from 1932 until 1937 when he was succeeded by F. C. Lester, who served until 1944. In 1940 Atkinson died, after serving twenty-three years as Mission Secretary. Because of impaired health during the latter years of his tenure, many duties of the office were assumed by F. C. Lester, who was named Promotional Secretary and authorized to supervise contributions to Missions after Atkinson's death. In this manner the title of Mission Secretary was discontinued and the functions of the Mission office continued under the new administrative title. When the office of Superintendent of the Convention was created in 1944, Lester was elected to the position, and the work of the Promotional Secretary became a part of his new duties. After a tenure of thirty-five years, Junius E. West resigned the presidency of the Mission Board in 1943. He was succeeded by Howard Smith Hardcastle, who served first as Acting Chairman then as Chairman until 1948. F. C. Lester filled the office during the 1948-1950 biennium, and was followed by Mrs. John G. Truitt, the first woman elected to the chairmanship of the Board. This significant act was not only a tribute to Mrs. Truitt but also a recognition of the achievements under competent leadership of the Woman's work in the Church. Female leadership proved to be efficient, and in 1954 Mrs. Truitt was succeeded in office by Mrs. W. E. Wisseman.⁶⁷ Both of these women were former presidents of the Woman's Mission Board.

Through its membership in the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the Christian Church was able to participate in a united mission program that was world-wide. The waging of World War II greatly handicapped activities, but the Southern Convention was informed that year, "The financial responsibilities of the American Board are not at all lessened because of the war situation." Although communications were closed to North China, Japan, the Philippines, Greece, and Bulgaria, money could still be sent to Ceylon, India, Turkey, Syria, Fukien Province in China, Free China, and to East, West and South Africa. In 1946 the Convention requested the Mission Board to raise funds for a Committee on War Victims and Reconstruction, in response to which \$6,328.31 was collected in 1947 and a goal of \$8,917.49 set for the following year.⁶⁸

In 1944 the American Board decided that the mission at Shaowu, in North Fukien Province, China, would have to be closed because of a shortage of funds and an insufficient number of workers. F. C. Lester, who was serving on the Prudential Committee of the American Board at the time, championed this phase of the missionary program so effectively at the 1944 session of the Southern Convention that the organization voted to request permission to assume full responsibility for the Shaowu operation. Permission was granted by the American Board for the Convention to adopt this project as its part of the Postwar Emergency Plan of the Church. The enterprise was not an independent movement of the Southern Convention but a phase of the work of the American Board for which the Convention was to furnish support. As a result, the \$10,000 required annually to finance the mission was raised, over and above all other contributions to missions. Lester then commissioned Richard L. Jackson, his wife Dorothy, and Miss Frances Whitaker, a registered nurse, to serve in the Chinese mission. After their arrival in China, Miss Whitaker married Dr. Edward Riggs, who had charge of the Shaowu Christian Hospital, and the two worked together as medical missionaries with Dr. Chu and other Chinese assistants. As the work of the hospital forged ahead, the Jacksons directed a renewed Christian emphasis through the mission schools and the church. Later Miss Leona Burr joined the staff as further expansion became possible. The reopening of Shaowu was the largest project for Foreign Missions undertaken by the Southern Convention up to that time, and probably since, and it was a great misfortune that its usefulness came to an early end because of political conditions in China. The schools and hospitals were nationalized by the Chinese government, and by 1951 only three American Board missionaries were still in the country. However, this outcome in no way lessens the credit due the Southern Convention for the effort it made on behalf of Foreign Missions.⁶⁹

In addition to the contributions made through the American Board, C. H. Mueller and his wife were sent to India, and Miss Harriett Summerville to Africa, with the support of these three undertaken by the Christian Church in Reidsville, North Carolina.⁷⁰ Conditions during the War and post-war years made the positions of the missionaries precarious and sometimes dangerous, but they remained at their posts whenever they were able to do so. The Foreign Mission program did not cease during the War or afterward, although its activities were sometimes curtailed; and the organization of the United Church of Christ in 1957 enlarged the mission scope to an even greater extent than ever before.

The following statistics show the financial growth of Missions in the Christian Church, as reported to the Southern Christian Convention and published in the Christian Annual for each year the Convention met:⁷¹

Biennium	Home Missions	Foreign Missions	Total
1918-1920			\$26,599.23
*1920-1922	\$43,130.64	\$27,668.55	\$70,799.19
**1922-1924			
1924-1926	22,154.32	27,735.19	49,889.51
1926-1928	24,681.20	28,154.49	52,835.69
1928-1930	37,975.14	34,064.23	72,003.37
***1930-1932	24,732.25	17,860.18	42,592.17
1932-1934			32,275.57
1934-1936			33,612.87
1936-1938			35,487.43
1938-1940			35,164.29
1940-1942			40,185.21
1942-1944			45,547.89
1944-1946			58,661.35
1946-1948	32,300.64	52,456.36	84,757.00
1948-1950	37,059.70	63,247.70	100,307.40
1950-1952	83,466.68	62,874.47	146,341.15
1952-1954	102,459.85	57,388.58	159,848.47
1954-1956	119,214.94	61,377.68	180,592.62

*Includes \$7,036.43 contributed for special causes.

**The report for this biennium did not give totals.

***These figures only cover the biennium to October 1, 1931, when the merger was consummated.

The impressive sum of these biennial contributions represented sacrificial giving on the part of many people, and it was raised with the countless prayers of the givers for divine blessing on its expenditure. The number of souls saved, the amount of Christian influence spread, and the direct or indirect uplift of individuals which were the result of these offerings are incalculable. The Home and Foreign Missions

programs were the outstanding contributions of the Christian and Congregational Christian churches to the promotion of Christianity in the world.

Footnotes

- ¹ *Conferences*, 37, 101.
- ² *Ibid*, 183, 186.
- ³ *Ibid*, 189.
- ⁴ *Minutes of the Thirty-Second Annual Meeting of the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference, Held At Bethlehem, Alamance County, N. C.*, (Privately Printed, 1857), 15-16.
- ⁵ *Carolina and Virginia Conference 1858*, 25-27.
- ⁶ *Minutes of the Thirty-Fifth Annual Session of the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference, Held at Pleasant Hill, Chatham County, N. C.*, (Suffolk: Southern Christian Book Concern, 1860), 20-22.
- ⁷ *Carolina and Virginia Conference 1862*, 11.
- ⁸ *Minutes of the Thirty-Ninth Annual Session of the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference, Held At Antioch, Chatham County, N. C.*, October 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th, 1864; And, Also *The Minutes of the Home Missionary Society, Connected With the Conference*, (Privately Printed, undated), 15.
- ⁹ *Carolina and Virginia Conference 1865*, 14.
- ¹⁰ *Carolina and Virginia Conference 1866*, 14.
- ¹¹ *Conferences*, 117.
- ¹² *Minutes of the Forty-Third Annual Session of the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference, Held At Salem Chapel, Forsythe County, N. C.*, Nov. 13, 14, 16, 17 and 18, 1868, (Suffolk: Christian Board of Publication, 1868), 13-14.
- ¹³ *Southern Convention 1856*, 17.
- ¹⁴ *Sun*, May 7, 1858.
- ¹⁵ *Morrill, Christian Denomination*, 248.
- ¹⁶ *Convention 1866, 1867 and 1870*, 13.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*, 22.
- ¹⁸ *Annual 1874*, 14.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*.
- ²⁰ *Annual 1878*, 18.
- ²¹ *Annual 1883*, 27.
- ²² *Ibid*.
- ²³ *Annual 1884*, 55.
- ²⁴ *Annual 1891*, 13.
- ²⁵ *Annual 1885*, 63-64.
- ²⁶ *Ibid*.
- ²⁷ *Annual 1887*, 21-22.
- ²⁸ *Annual 1891*, 27-29.
- ²⁹ *Ibid*, 15-17.
- ³⁰ *Morrill, Christian Denomination*, 287-289.
- ³¹ *Annual 1893*, 17.
- ³² *Annual 1891*, 21.
- ³³ *Ibid*, 19.
- ³⁴ *Annual 1897*, 23.
- ³⁵ *Annual 1891*, 37.
- ³⁶ *Morrill, Christian Denomination*, 340.
- ³⁷ *Annual 1893*, 19.
- ³⁸ *Annual 1895*, 13.
- ³⁹ *Annual 1896*, 108-111.
- ⁴⁰ *Annual 1897*, 107; *Annual 1898*, 111.
- ⁴¹ *Annual 1901*, 125-126; *Annual 1903*, 124, 130; *Annual 1905*, 6; *Annual 1909*, 134, 54.

- ⁴² *Annual 1909*, 133. See also, J. E. West, "A Brief History of Missions in the Christian Church," *Sun*, May 27, 1937. Hereinafter cited as West, *Brief History*.
- ⁴³ *Annual 1909*, 32-33, 54, 61, 109; *Annual 1915*, 45, 144-145.
- ⁴⁴ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 288-289.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 353-354.
- ⁴⁶ *Annual 1907*, 62.
- ⁴⁷ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 290.
- ⁴⁸ Wilson P. Minton, *Ministry For Christ in Porto Rico*, (Dayton, Ohio: Christian Publishing Association, 1927), 1-7. Hereinafter cited as Minton, *Porto Rico*.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 8-20.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 21.
- ⁵¹ *Annual 1907*, 39; *Annual 1911*, 14.
- ⁵² *Annual 1915*, 18.
- ⁵³ *Ibid*, 27; *Annual 1919*, 23.
- ⁵⁴ West, *Brief History*.
- ⁵⁵ *Annual 1919*, 24.
- ⁵⁶ *Annual 1921*, 26.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 24-25.
- ⁵⁸ *Annual 1923*, 34.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 35.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid*. See also *Annual 1925*, 15; *Annual 1928*, 31; *Annual 1934*, 15; and *Annual 1948*, 25.
- ⁶¹ Author's Note: Miss Edwards and I were classmates in the Burlington High School. D.T.S.
- ⁶² *Sun*, April 1, 1937.
- ⁶³ *Ibid*, April 28, 1937.
- ⁶⁴ *Annual 1938*, 33.
- ⁶⁵ *Annual 1925*, 15; *Annual 1930*, 18.
- ⁶⁶ *Annual 1930*, 18.
- ⁶⁷ *Annual 1932*, 17; *Annual 1942*, 30-31; *Annual 1944*, 41; *Annual 1950*, 21; *Annual 1954*, 25; and *Annual 1956*, 34.
- ⁶⁸ *Annual 1942*, 31; *Annual 1946*, 51; *Annual 1948*, 19.
- ⁶⁹ *Annual 1944*, 41; *Annual 1946*, 38; *Annual 1948*, 25, 42; *Annual 1952*, 28.
- ⁷⁰ *Annual 1948*, 25.
- ⁷¹ Special contributions may have been made which would have increased the totals, but there is no definite record of these.

Chapter XI

The Christian Orphanage

During the 1894 session of the Southern Christian Convention at Norfolk, Virginia, approval was given to a motion by Patrick Henry Fleming that a committee be appointed to consider plans for an orphanage. Ministers P. T. Klapp, P. H. Fleming, and J. W. Holt were appointed to serve with laymen J. A. Mills and J. W. Harden on the committee.¹ This action was the beginning of one of the most significant benevolent enterprises of the Christian Church. At the 1896 meeting of the Convention the committee made no report, but the Committee on Schools and Colleges proposed:

That this Convention establish an orphanage. For this we consider an industrial school best suited for the purpose. A farm of 100 acres of land, or more, can be obtained. On it houses for dwellings, school, shops, barns, etc., can be from time to time erected, a variety of crops cultivated, fowls and cattle raised, etc.

We recommend the appointment of a committee of three persons who shall be charged with the duty of selecting a location, appointing a superintendent, and doing all that may be necessary to execute the purpose herein indicated. For their service they shall receive such compensation from any fund collected for the orphanage as the Executive Committee of this body shall determine.²

Upon the adoption of this recommendation, W. S. Long, J. A. Mills and E. L. Moffitt were appointed to serve as the Orphanage Committee. Two years later this Committee reported to the Convention that no action had been taken because "Until funds are supplied we are helpless also."³

When Mrs. J. L. Foster succeeded Mrs. J. P. Barrett as Secretary of Children's Mission during the 1890-1892 biennium, the treasury of the organization contained sixty-five cents. This sum seemed in-

finitesimally small, but it actually was the nucleus for a fund that would eventually become sufficient to build a home for orphans. In 1892 Mrs. Foster reported an addition of \$4.50, making a total of \$5.15. The biennial collection reported in 1894 was \$17.11, and in 1896 it was \$14.75.⁴ These sums were raised by pennies and half pennies contributed by children and represents a greater per capita participation than the comparatively small total indicates.

For several years prior to 1896 D. J. Mood had edited the Children's Corner in the *Christian Sun* under the pseudonym "Uncle Tangle." The children throughout the Church often wrote to "Uncle" and enjoyed seeing their letters published in his Corner. Mood's general reply to all appeared in each issue of the paper, and it was by this means that he aroused the interest of the children in an orphanage. Consequently, the letters often contained contributions, and when Mood resigned in 1897 he had collected \$52.21. He was succeeded by J. L. Foster, who thereafter edited the Corner as either "Uncle Tangle" or "Uncle Jim," and the children's interest continued to increase.⁵

The contributions of the children of the Church totalled \$498.38 by 1898, and the Convention voted that Foster serve as the Financial Secretary of the Orphanage and continue editing the Children's Corner. It was also decided that action had been delayed long enough and a new committee composed of P. H. Fleming, J. W. Holt, J. A. Mills, W. S. Long, and G. S. Watson was appointed to decide upon a suitable location for the institution.⁶

The new Committee was able to report to the Convention in 1900 that \$2,021.20 had been contributed due to the publicity given the orphanage in the *Christian Sun*. It recommended that Foster continue to serve as Financial Secretary and seven trustees be appointed to supervise the project. W. B. Mann, W. J. Lee, John A. Mills., W. S. Long, J. F. West, E. L. Moffitt, and J. W. Holt were appointed and empowered to incorporate the orphanage, purchase a site, and begin construction of a building. To expedite matters, an Orphanage Committee was created, composed of Long as Chairman, with West and Moffitt as members.⁷

On December 27, 1904, the trustees decided to locate the institution at Elon College and purchased 112.5 acres of land at a cost of \$2,410.05 for the purpose. Contributions of \$50 from J. J. Lambeth and \$150 from John Albright, two of the landowners involved, reduced the cost of the land by \$200. "Friends about the college offered a donation of \$1,000," was reported, but it is not clear from the records whether or not this sum was ever collected. The reasons given for choosing the Elon location were:

1. Because, in our judgment, the orphanage can be provided for, in the future, at less expense at this place than at any other.
2. It will be more prominently before our people and the public here than elsewhere.
3. It is in a section of the State in which there is no similar institution near it.
4. It concentrates to a great extent our general enterprises.⁸

This decision of the trustees was endorsed by the Executive Committee of the Convention and subsequently approved by that body.

A charter was obtained from the State of North Carolina in 1905 incorporating "The Christian Orphanage," and a plan for the main building was adopted on April 18th of that year. Wheeler, Runge and Dickey of Charlotte, North Carolina, drew the plans for the main building which was to be of brick, 116 feet by 39 feet 9 inches, two stories high, with a wing 24 by 30 feet, and a basement for the laundry. On July 24, 1905, contracts were let to the firms of Nicholson and Lashley of Graham, North Carolina, for the wood work, and to Kirkpatrick Brothers of Burlington, North Carolina, for the brick work. Funds available being less than the estimated cost of the building, a loan of \$3,000 was obtained from an insurance company in Richmond, Virginia, and construction was completed.⁹

Seven trustees were then elected to comply with the provisions of the corporate charter. W. H. Carroll and L. M. Clymer were elected for six years; G. S. Watson and Elijah Moffitt for four years; and J. O. Atkinson, C. D. West and I. W. Johnson for two years. Their successors were to be elected every two years for a term of six years.¹⁰

When completed, the Main or Children's Building contained five large bedrooms, nine small bedrooms, a dining room, kitchen, and chapel. The next task was the erection of a barn 28 feet by 34 feet with 9 feet by 36 feet addition for cow stalls, a crib, granary with wagon and buggy shelter, smokehouse, a cement block milk house, and a storage room. These were speedily completed, and on January 2, 1906, James L. Foster was elected Superintendent of the Orphanage at a salary of \$50 per month, with living quarters in the institution. The next year his salary was raised to \$800 per year, and he was allowed to serve a church one Sunday each month. Besides the Superintendent, the Orphanage staff included Miss Dora Edwards, housekeeper; Mrs. Annie H. Kissell, general assistant; and Mrs. J. L. Foster, teacher.¹¹

The total cost of the institution as of April 1908 was as follows:

Cost of land	\$ 2,210.05
Cost of Children's Building	8,557.46
Cost of Insurance and Incidentals	236.09
Expenditures during 18 months	5,217.49
	\$16,221.09 ¹²

Of this sum only \$3,000 was still unpaid. The operation of the Orphanage depended upon the income from its farm, the Children's offerings, Sunday School contributions, Thanksgiving offerings by churches, and special gifts. In 1907 the farm had yielded a profit of \$700. Jesse Winborne of Elon College, North Carolina, and R. A. Hy-slop of Norfolk, Virginia, had promised donations, and contributions were generous, so the future of the institution appeared assured.¹³

On January 28, 1907, the Orphanage received its first child, Lelia Mae Canada of Durham, North Carolina. During the year twenty-three more arrived, and there were applications for the reception of others.¹⁴ The Christian Orphanage was in operation to carry out the terms of its charter: "to receive into its care and custody, . . . such orphan children, whether indigent or not, as its trustees may desire to provide for, upon compliance with the rules and regulations of the institution for its government and control." Furthermore, the charter stated:

That the trustees shall have power to place any child received by it and under its care and control in a good home and under the care and tutelage of a suitable person and under such rules and regulations and contracts as they may from time to time establish; or as they may agree upon in any particular case; and in case any child shall be ill treated in any respect the trustees shall have the power to reclaim such child; and for the violation of the contract or for any injury to the child the corporation may maintain an action in the name of the child or in its own name in any court having jurisdiction thereof.¹⁵

The magnitude of this responsibility was equalled only by the courage of the Christian Church to assume it, and the founding of the Orphanage was one of the most significant contributions it made to Christian benevolence.

The Trustees reported to the Southern Christian Convention in 1910 that thirty-five children were being cared for at the Orphanage, and the operating expense for the past biennium had been \$10,074.07.¹⁶ The number of children increased to forty-six in 1912, but the income did not substantially increase and the institution still owed \$1,660.00. However, the needs of the Orphanage were relieved by many gifts other than money, as reported in detail by J. O. Atkinson, Chairman of the Board:

During the two fiscal years April 1, 1910, to April 1, 1912, we have received in kind, shoes, clothes, cloth, caps, second-hand suits, grain and supplies, confectioneries, cash for treats to the children, books, papers, etc., at an approximate value of \$525.00; and in addition to this thirty-six bed quilts of great value and usefulness. For these gifts in kind the Board desires to record its grateful appreciation.

By the will of the late Miss Kate Holmes, of Alamance County, we have received her entire estate, which will give to the Orphanage some over \$200.00 in money and a \$200.00 first mortgage on real estate, and in addition thereto, 26 quilts, 20 bureau scarfs, five sheets, 12 towels, 34 pillow cases, some blankets and other bed room furnishings. This makes a total of three bequests to the Orphanage, those of the late lamented Jesse Winborne, and H. Mulholland, and this of Miss Holmes, only the last named of which is immediately available.¹⁷

The money from these bequests became available before 1916, and \$3,352.85 of it was used to purchase a four-acre tract adjoining the Orphanage property and containing a two-story dwelling of nine rooms as a home for the Superintendent.¹⁸

Superintendent Foster retired in 1912 and was succeeded for a term of one year by E. M. Carter. The next Superintendent was J. O. Cox who remained in office until November 15, 1915. H. E. McPherson then filled the office until November 1, 1917. He was succeeded by Charles D. Johnston, who had served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. "Uncle Charley," as he became familiarly known far and wide, superintended the Orphanage until his death on February 27, 1949, a term of thirty-two years!¹⁹

In 1914 the increasing income of the Orphanage enabled the Trustees to install both a water and sewer system and a steam heating plant in the institution, which greatly added to the convenience of the residents and the safety of the property. An average of fifty children were cared for annually, but applications for admission continued to increase. In 1918 sleeping porches were added to the main building in order that sixty children could be housed. This encouraging progress was offset, however, by the necessity of turning away more than sixty children in 1919 because there was no room for them.²⁰

William Kirkpatrick Holt, a merchant of Burlington, North Carolina, became Chairman of the Board of Trustees in 1918 and filled this office until his death on July 30, 1928. Working in close cooperation with Superintendent Johnston, the Chairman was able to report to the Southern Convention in 1920 that the Christian Orphanage was free from debt. In addition, sixty-two acres of adjacent property had been purchased for future expansion at a cost of \$6,250.00, and \$5,362.06 had been set aside in the Children's Home Fund to accumulate the money for erecting an additional building. The Trustees were able to use the financial income more freely for improvements because of the many contributions that were made in goods. The cotton mills in the area donated seventeen hundred yards of cloth for dresses and overalls on one Thanksgiving; seventy-five bags of fertilizer were given to the farm by guano companies; and Holland and Beamon company of Suffolk, Virginia, presented a car-

load of coal each fall. These gifts amounted to \$3,000. In addition, the result of an appeal made by J. M. Darden in the Eastern Virginia Conference was a railroad carload of food.²¹ These were large and valuable contributions, but there were also many useful small ones and each one, large or small, was gratefully acknowledged on "The Christian Orphanage Page" conducted by the Superintendent in the *Christian Sun*. On November 27, 1918, Johnston included the following account of a small contribution:

A few days since while we were busy at our desk some one knocked and when we opened the door our dear old friend, Captain J. A. Turrentine of Burlington, was in the yard with his wagon loaded with things for the Orphanage. He commanded us to unload as he was in a hurry and we proceeded to obey the command as we could not refuse so kind a friend. The load consisted of flour, potatoes, pumpkins, rape and corn given by different parties.

In the lot was five bushels of corn as fine as I have ever seen. The Captain told me it was his birthday and he wanted to make a Thanksgiving offering to show his appreciation of seeing his eighty-third mile post. He raised the corn, he brought himself, and did all the work and ploughed it with a mule twenty-three years old. I just thought if a man eighty-three years old ploughing with a mule twenty-three years old could raise as fine corn as this, what ought a young man like myself with the Orphanage team do? So I stored all of this corn away in a safe place and expect to plant my crop out of it next spring.²²

A few years later during one summer "quite a number of the Sunday schools, Ladies' Aid Societies, and individuals" canned "much fruit" and sent this food to the institution. Clothing, blankets, quilts, and Christmas gifts for the children were also sent regularly, and all of these contributions were evidence of the cooperative effort to support the humane mission of the Orphanage.²³

The financial report of the Trustees for the biennium 1918-1920 which was submitted to the Southern Convention contained the following fiscal data:

Income	\$44,675.30
Expense	32,764.75
Profit from the Farm	1,459.35
Profit from the Dairy	1,513.76 ²⁴

These figures reflect the post-World War I boom in economic prosperity in addition to the general interest in the Orphanage, and the increased contributions made immediate expansion possible. Because of these circumstances, Chairman Holt was able to report the completion of the Baby Home to the Southern Convention in 1922:

The Children's Home that we mentioned to you in our last report has been built at a cost of thirty-two thousand eight hun-

dred and twenty dollars and four cents (\$32,820.04) including water, lights, sewerage, heating plant and furnishings.

This is a splendid structure of brick, a two-story building with four large basement rooms with cement floors. This building contains twenty rooms besides the basement rooms and will accommodate seventy-five children if we see fit to put that many in it. We have at present thirty-two little tots in it.

All the four buildings have been re-covered during the last two years and our barn was not adequate to take care of the feed and give room for horses and cattle so we cut enough lumber out of our own pine forest to make all the framing and have built and equipped a new modern barn on the Lowder plan, 50 feet long by 36 feet wide at a cost of one thousand three hundred and twenty dollars and nine cents (\$1,320.09). This barn is a great asset to the farm department in housing the stock and in giving plenty of room to store feed raised on the Orphanage farm.

.....
We are glad to say to you that you have in the Christian Orphanage plant including lands, buildings, farm and dairy equipment a plant valued at \$100,000.00 with eighty-three little orphan boys and girls to love you and appreciate what you do for them that they may have an equal opportunity in life with other boys and girls. We are also glad to say to you that this Institution has no debt but we have to our credit in cash, due bills, and Liberty Bonds the amount of \$4,355.26.²⁵

The report included an expression of appreciation to two former residents of Burlington, North Carolina, neither of whom were members of the Christian Church. Lawrence S. Holt, Sr. of Washington, D. C. donated \$3,000, "the largest single contribution we received," and included the Orphanage in an endowment which provided an income of \$100 per month. James N. Williamson of DeLand, Florida, donated \$2,000 to be used in heating the building.²⁶

While contributions of money and goods were vital to the existence of the Orphanage, the successful operation of the institution was also substantially supported by the efficient management of its farm and dairy. Not only did these two enterprises provide a useful occupation for the larger children and furnish large quantities of food for the institution, but they also made a profit which added to the financial income. The following statistics show the growth of this income:

Year	Farm	Dairy
1922	\$ 557.57	\$1,402.47
1924	1,754.22	1,391.68
1926	1,739.53	3,382.87
1928	2,526.09	3,182.59 ²⁷

Because of this profitable operation, additional farm land was purchased whenever possible and during the 1928-1930 biennium totalled 204 acres, including five acres donated by P. J. Carlton of Richmond, Virginia. During the same period the institution received \$4,000 worth

of agricultural products from a farm in South Carolina developed for the Orphanage by H. A. Carlton of Raleigh, North Carolina. Misfortune also accompanied the good fortune, for the feed barn burned in 1929, incurring a loss of several thousands of dollars.²⁸ Generous friends helped to offset this loss and did so again in 1935 when the barn burned a second time, with a financial loss even greater than that of the first fire.²⁹

A great deal of the success in operating the farm at Elon was due to the expertise of its managers. Dennis Churchill was one of the farm supervisors in the early years of its operation, and possibly there were others who cannot be identified now, but the greatest progress was made under the management of Les W. Wagoner who became the farm manager in 1923 and served in that capacity for thirty-seven years. He was assisted by Garner Hilliard as manager of the dairy from 1941 until 1954, and there were other assistants from time to time; but Wagoner planned and executed the operation which not only made a profit but produced the nutritious food that was served in bountiful measure at the Orphanage.

The Lawrence S. Holt, Sr. Fund was amended in 1924 to provide an annual income of \$900, which was a reduction of \$300. This loss was more than offset by the inclusion of the Orphanage in the J. B. Duke Foundation, which added \$3,774.55 to the income of the institution in 1926-1927. The trustees were accordingly encouraged to begin construction of a third building in 1926, and two years later Johnston Hall was completed, furnished, and housed twenty-five children. This brought the annual average number of children cared for by the Orphanage to 103 and the total property value of the institution to \$157,900.83. The happiness for which this progress was responsible was considerably marred at the dedication of the new building on July 30, 1928, when Chairman Holt was fatally stricken and died within the building he had labored so diligently to erect.³⁰ The completion of adequate building facilities at the Orphanage was the goal for which the Chairman strove, and he was privileged to see its accomplishment before he was taken from mortal life. His loss was keenly felt, but the improvements and additions developed during his tenure of office enabled the institution to forge ahead in the humane work for which it was created.

John R. Foster, vice chairman of the Board, held the executive position during the remainder of Holt's unexpired term. He was succeeded in 1929 by J. M. Darden of Suffolk, Virginia, who filled the office with capability and enthusiasm for the ensuing decade.

While the brighter side of the maintenance of the Orphanage by the Christian Church has been pictured, it must be realized that these results were not obtained without great effort and sacrifice on the part of many individuals and organizations. At the same time the enter-

prise was aided by the natural sympathy of people for orphaned, homeless children, and this attitude enabled the Church to develop and operate the project as one of its most successful endeavors. Many people within and without the Church felt that education was primarily the responsibility of state and local government, and this conviction often hindered the raising of funds for a church-related school. In the fields of home and foreign missions social distinctions, racial prejudices and ethnic differences tended to impede the programs. Even church extension as a cooperative enterprise was disapproved by some people, but these objections were much less often voiced where the Orphanage was concerned. Interest in caring for the children crossed denominational bounds for Holt and Williamson were Episcopalians, Duke was a Methodist, and many of the supporters of the institution belonged to various religious organizations other than the Christian Church. An example of such interest and assistance is found in the report made to the Southern Convention in 1924:

The Orphanage management is very grateful to Drs. Walker and Dick, [J. B. Walker and J. V. Dick] of Gibsonville, N. C., for their splendid cooperation in our work. They are very faithful to attend our sick ones and will come day or night and give their services free of charge. Dr. W. E. Walker, of Burlington, N. C., has been real kind to us in dressing wounds, lancing boils and any other trouble we have called on him for. He also gives his services free. Dr. J. H. Brooks, of Burlington, looks after the children's teeth, and gives his services. We are grateful that we have these kind friends in the medical profession, and it is quite a help to us in our work.³¹

Of the four, only Drs. J. B. Walker and J. H. Brooks belonged to the Christian Church. Another example of outside assistance was the renovation of the O. Henry Hotel in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1930, when the new management gave all the discarded tables, chairs, carpets and dressers to the Orphanage. In that same year Edwin Gould of the Edwin Gould Foundation in New York City visited the institution and shortly afterward sent a number of useful and valuable contributions.³² There were many other gifts of similar nature throughout the years from many sources in addition to the consistent loyalty and generosity of the membership of the Christian Church.

Another reason for the communal interest in the Orphanage and the general success of its program is that every conceivable effort was made to make the children feel that they lived in a home and not in an institution. One of the factors that made this possible was that the enrollment was never too large for personal contact, 120 being the maximum number set by the Trustees, and children and staff were able to know each other intimately. Whenever possible, each child spent a vacation period as a guest in a private home and was often made a protegee of that family, with a special personal relation main-

tained thereafter. Many people visited the children informally and were always welcome. For several years the First Christian Church of Burlington, North Carolina, held its annual picnic at the Orphanage and the children of both organizations enjoyed romping together over the spacious and well-kept grounds at Elon. Selections were often graciously rendered for visitors by the Singing Class, which gained quite an enviable reputation for its excellence, or with an individual performance by some talented child who was being given piano lessons. Sometimes visitors performed also, so the affairs were a form of congenial entertainment and not a duty required to impress the public.³³

Each child was assigned a particular job—for everyone in the institution worked—but they were not subjected to drudgery. The major part of the labor necessary to operate the institution was performed by those who lived there. The boys worked on the farm, in the dairy, and on the grounds; while the girls sewed, cooked, and did the housekeeping. At times all worked together in the harvest fields, and they were often accompanied by the members of the staff, including the Superintendent himself. Strict discipline was exercised, but it was not severe and a high moral standard was maintained.

The work program was not allowed to interfere with the education of the children. Until the public school system in the town of Elon College could accommodate them, they were taught at the Orphanage. While a complete list of the teachers who followed Mrs. Foster is incomplete, it includes Misses Myrtle Foster, Blanche Byrd, Elizabeth Brothers, Annie Simpson, and Mesdames S. S. Brown and Dora Edwards. When the public school facilities had increased to the extent that all the children could be accommodated, classes were discontinued at the Orphanage. In 1938 the Trustees made the following report concerning education to the Southern Convention:

Our children attend the public school two blocks from our campus. Those who graduate and want to attend college and can get some friend to make it possible, go to Elon College. We have three girls and one boy who will graduate from the Commercial Department at Elon College this spring. One girl finishes her two years of foundation work for a course in nursing. She will enter Duke University School of Nursing this fall. All these children have been financed by some friend who lent them money and took their note.³⁴

Ten years later the Convention was informed that more advantageous arrangements had been made for those who wished to acquire a college education:

Our children have splendid school advantages. We live within a short distance of the Elon Public School. All the children above the second grade come home for lunch. After graduating, if they want to go to college we always have made arrangements

to take care of their tuition, and let them pay it back after they go to work and begin to draw a salary. Out of all the girls and boys who have borrowed money to pay their college expenses, all of them have paid it back.³⁵

The report to the 1948 Convention also stated:

Their spiritual welfare is also looked out for. We send them to Sunday School and church, and on Wednesday night of each week, Dr. J. H. Dollar, our pastor, and Miss Walker, his assistant, put on a religious program at the Orphanage, which the children enjoy and are very much interested in.³⁶

The children also benefitted from the high moral influence and training of the many women who served the institution at various times during half a century as matrons and supervisors. There is no complete record of these dedicated women, but the success of their efforts has been reflected in the lives of the children. All of those who spent a part of their childhood at the institution went into the world's work prepared to become useful citizens, and "Uncle Charley" Johnston is reported to have remarked, near the end of his life, that he had never heard of a criminal or immoral charge made against any one of his children.

Chairman Darden died during 1937 and was succeeded by Vitus R. Holt, son of former Chairman W. K. Holt. During the tenure of the new executive the trustees continued to follow the long established policy of acquiring additional land for the institution whenever possible. In 1935 the dwelling known as the Boone House was destroyed by fire and the insurance money used to purchase four acres of land and build a six room house for the Orphanage farmer. The same year two acres were donated by L. E. Carlton and his wife, and in 1945 Oscar F. Smith contributed five acres. Also, during the latter year a dwelling of twelve rooms near Johnston Hall was purchased. The house burned shortly afterward, but the insurance reimbursed the treasury for its actual cost. Also in the same year twenty-five acres were acquired on the east side of the farm, "making our line straight from north to south."³⁷

John G. Truitt succeeded the deceased Johnston as Superintendent in 1950. During the first years of his term a house was built for the Superintendent on the Orphanage grounds at a cost of \$22,000.³⁸ Johnston had owned his own home in the town of Elon College, and the dwelling designated as a superintendent's home many years before had long since been converted to other uses, so housing for new superintendents had become an urgent necessity. During the 1954-1956 biennium the family of the late W. K. Holt donated \$56,556.88 to build and equip the handsome Holt Memorial Chapel on the institution's grounds. This memorial gift provided a facility which

had long been needed and enabled Truitt to inform the Convention, "... its worth has already been felt in our Orphanage family and will grow to mean more and more through the years to come." During the same biennium the former children of the institution contributed a freezer locker and a large cold room in memory of Charles D. Johnston, and the immediate usefulness of this gift was immeasurable.³⁹

One of the first innovations of the Truitt administration was the placing of a herd of beef cattle on the farm. Shortly afterward an irrigation system was installed, followed by the construction of a four-acre, state-approved lake. Heating arrangements were greatly improved by changing from a wood and coal system to natural gas and coal. Vitally needed fire escapes were installed on the buildings; the kitchen was renovated to conform to the standards approved by the State of North Carolina; and major repairs were made throughout Johnston Hall. An extensive beautification program for the grounds was promoted and new driveways were laid out. The Superintendent was able to obtain the lengthening of Trollinger Avenue to join Oak Avenue, thus adding a road on the Orphanage property to the thoroughfare system of the town of Elon College. The Orphanage also joined the town and College in a sewage filter system to serve the area. When the decision was made that the Main Building could no longer be used without an excessively expensive remodeling, it was abandoned and a system begun of housing the children in small groups in cottages. The major part of this plan, which was conceived by Superintendent Truitt, was completed during the decade after his retirement and is the housing plan in use today.⁴⁰

During his superintendency, Truitt was twice elected president of the North Carolina State Orphanage Association and served as one of the committee of three officials which established a training program for orphanage employees. The "in-training" classes were conducted by the Social Work School of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the school was attended by staff members from the institution at Elon. During the 1958-1960 biennium John Biggerstaff, an honor graduate of Elon College, became assistant to the superintendent, and within a short time added a master's degree from the Social Work School to his qualifications.⁴¹ Truitt also inaugurated the practice of issuing a monthly calendar containing news of the Orphanage which informed the alumni and friends of the events transpiring at the institution.

The climax of Superintendent Truitt's administration was reached when the Southern Convention gave him permission to organize the Christian Home Improvement Program, familiarly called the "CHIP," to raise \$200,000 for the Orphanage. The campaign was organized by naming as honorary chairman Mrs. James H. McEwen

(nee Iris Holt, a daughter of the former chairman W. K. Holt) of Burlington, North Carolina, director. Under the efficient efforts of this leadership \$213,000 was eventually raised for the institution. Memorial gifts included a bequest from the estate of the late Addie V. Montgomery in memory of her husband, H. M. Montgomery, who practiced medicine in Burlington during his lifetime; Mrs. James L. Foster, Sr., established a fund in memory of her husband, the first superintendent of the Orphanage; Marvin McPherson and his wife made a contribution in memory of John R. Foster, the father of Mrs. McPherson. Through the efforts of Clyde W. Gordon of Burlington, the Chester H. Roth Company Fund was established in 1955. Mrs. Maggie Dixon of Summerfield, North Carolina, sent boxwood valued at \$500 to add to the beauty of the grounds, and there were many other contributions which lack of space prohibits listing.⁴² The CHIP Campaign and the individual gifts revived the financial status of the institution and prepared the way for the changes and improvements that were made during the ensuing decade.

The Golden Anniversary of the Christian Orphanage was celebrated with appropriate ceremonies on September 2, 1956. In that same year Superintendent Truitt reported to the Southern Convention an income of \$218,087.30 for the years 1954-1955, including the funds for the erection of the Holt Chapel. The disbursements were \$217,062.23; there was no indebtedness; and the institution was properly equipped and in good repair.⁴³

In 1956 the Southern Christian Convention received a report from the Survey Committee which had been appointed four years previously to study the enterprises for which the Convention was responsible and recommend changes if they were deemed advisable. The Committee was composed of George D. Alley, chairman; William J. Andes, secretary; and William E. Wisseman, H. Shelton Smith, F. C. Lester, W. R. Savage, Jr., S. C. Harrell, James H. Lightbourne, Jr., George D. Coldclough, James F. Darden, I. H. Vickery, and Mesdames W. W. Sellers and M. W. Andes, members. L. E. Smith and John G. Truitt were consulting members and William T. Scott and Jesse H. Dollar were ex-officio members.

The lengthy report of this Committee included the following financial appraisal of the Orphanage work:

The Christian Orphanage, with negligible permanent funds, must depend upon current income for its operation. The present cost per child for the operation of the Orphanage is a little more than \$800 per year. On this basis, it would seem that the churches' financial potential would provide care for fifty children. Of this amount, \$25,000 should come through apportionment and \$15,000 from individuals and organizations within the churches, to be so credited. The Orphanage should expect to receive maximum sup-

port from the families of children and from county, state and federal welfare agencies. Funds for capital improvements should come, upon the approval of the Convention, from individuals, corporations, and organizations outside the churches, as well as from the church and church constituencies on the Orphanage's own appeals.⁴⁴

The Committee also raised the following questions with a recommendation as to how they might be answered:

Many vital questions arise in connection with our struggle to maintain the Christian Orphanage. (1) Have we not, of necessity, been so concerned with keeping the institution alive as to have lost sight of many modern trends in the whole field of child care and placement? (2) Over the years, have we kept up-to-date by adopting these modern methods gained from experience by social workers across the country? (3) Have we followed through on our responsibility for the home placement of children as specified in the charter? (4) Have we placed sufficient emphasis on the full, legal adoption of children by qualified persons? (5) Have we been more concerned with caring for *numbers* of children than with the *quality* of care we are able to provide? Could we not care for 50 children more adequately than 80 with the resources now available? (7) If so, should be [we] not take definite steps to limit the number of children under our care? (8) Is the use of such antiquated terms as "orphanage," "matron," etc., indicative of our *vocabulary*, or of our *thinking*, where the policies and practices of the orphanage are concerned? The Survey Committee would strongly recommend that the proper persons on the Staff, the Board of Trustees, and in the Southern Convention give thorough study to each of the above questions.⁴⁵

As a result of the study raised by these questions the maximum number of children in residence at the Orphanage was kept at about seventy-five, and all of the special care possible was given each. The report to the Southern Convention in 1960 stated:

The average number of children cared for daily during the bien-nium was 70. There were 12 new children received during that time. There are 71 children at the Home at present, and 4 of them are seniors in high school. Of the children at the Home, 4 are full orphans, 11 mother dead, 17 father dead—32 orphans and half-orphans, and 39 from broken families.⁴⁶

One child was legally adopted during this period, the only case of such an action in the history of the Orphanage.

Another recommendation of the Survey Committee was that the name of the institution be changed to "The Congregational Christian Home For Children," and with the adoption of the report, the old appellation of "The Christian Orphanage" was discarded. Shortly after the United Church of Christ was formed the institution was renamed "The Elon Home For Children," and is operated as such today.

Superintendent Truitt retired in 1960 and was succeeded by Walstein W. Snyder, who is serving in the office at present. Chairman Vitus R. Holt died in 1959 and Harold B. Kernodle, a medical doctor of Burlington, replaced him.⁴⁷

As a result of the study made by the Survey Committee, the type of operation conducted by the Home gradually changed to that of a Multiple Service Agency and the method of caring for the children was altered considerably. The increasing participation of the federal and state governments in welfare programs which aided private institutions was decidedly a factor in this transition. In 1972, under the revised program, 70 children are enrolled in Group Care and housed at the institution. Thirty-five children are under the Day Care program, three under Foster Care, and eight under After Care. The children in residence are housed in modern cottages: Rudd, Wisseman, Montgomery, McEwen, and Harden. The old Main Building and the Baby Home have been removed, but Johnston Hall remains as the Administration Building. The Holt Chapel, the Superintendent's Home, and the McFarland Activities Building, which includes an adjacent swimming pool, comprise the remainder of the buildings. The Home owns 210 acres of land and the entire plant is valued at \$2,145,862.04.

The operation of the institution has changed with the years as times and conditions of society have changed, but it still remains an active unit of the Church, dedicated to the humane purpose of providing a home for the homeless and a family for the orphaned. A total of 752 children have passed through its doors since they were opened and, with the exception of the almost incredibly few who died at the institution, have gone out into the world far better prepared to live as Christian citizens than they might otherwise have been had there been no orphanage at Elon College. The beneficial care given this large group during childhood has been reflected in the exemplary careers of the group as a whole since its members left their Elon home. This work was and is one of the outstanding accomplishments of the Christian Church.

Footnotes

- ¹ *Annual* 1895, 11.
- ² *Annual* 1897, 14, 21.
- ³ *Annual* 1899, 23-25.
- ⁴ W. W. Staley, "The Christian Orphanage—Its History and Progress," *Sun*, June 8, 1921. See also *Annual* 1893, 14.
- ⁵ *Annual* 1899, 8, 23. See also J. O. Cox, "History of Our Orphanage," *Sun*, October 13, 1915. Hereinafter cited as Cox, *History*.
- ⁶ *Annual* 1899, 25.
- ⁷ *Annual* 1901, 25, 29.
- ⁸ *Annual* 1907, 44.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 48.
- ¹¹ *Annual* 1909, 6-9.
- ¹² *Ibid.*
- ¹³ *Annual* 1911, 8; *Annual* 1909, 9.
- ¹⁴ Cox, *History*; *Annual* 1909, 8.
- ¹⁵ *Annual* 1907, 42-43.
- ¹⁶ *Annual* 1910, 8.
- ¹⁷ *Annual* 1913, 7.
- ¹⁸ *Annual* 1917, 35.
- ¹⁹ *Annual* 1915, 34; *Annual* 1919, 29.
- ²⁰ *Annual* 1921, 32.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 32-33.
- ²² *Sun*, November 27, 1918. Author's Note: One of my most vivid childhood memories is that of accompanying my grandfather on the long ride on that cold November day. D.T.S.
- ²³ *Annual* 1919, 29.
- ²⁴ *Annual* 1921, 29-32.
- ²⁵ *Annual* 1923, 25-26.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 24. See also *Annual* 1925, 11; *Annual* 1926, 24; and *Annual* 1928, 24.
- ²⁸ *Annual* 1930, 6.
- ²⁹ *Annual* 1936, 25.
- ³⁰ *Annual* 1928, 22; *Annual* 1930, 53-54.
- ³¹ *Annual* 1925, 10.
- ³² *Annual* 1932, 13.
- ³³ Author's Note: I was present on a number of these occasions and was impressed with the congenial atmosphere. D.T.S.
- ³⁴ *Annual* 1938, 30.
- ³⁵ *Annual* 1948, 40.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁷ *Annual* 1936, 25; *Annual* 1946, 26; *Annual* 1948, 40.
- ³⁸ *Annual* 1952, 39.
- ³⁹ *Annual* 1956, 52-53.
- ⁴⁰ John Galloway Truitt, *Twelve Little Lead Pencils*, an unpublished autobiography, typescript in the Church History Room, 131-138. Hereinafter cited as Truitt, *Twelve Pencils*.
- ⁴¹ *Annual* 1962, 46; Truitt, *Twelve Pencils*, 35.
- ⁴² *Annual* 1958, 55; Truitt, *Twelve Pencils*, 135-137.
- ⁴³ *Annual* 1956, 52-53.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 40, 45.

⁴⁵ *Annual 1960*, 53.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* *The Minutes of the Proceedings of the Board of Trustees of the Christian Orphanage, the Congregational Christian Home For Children, and the Elon Home For Children*, filed in the office of the institution, have not been used for reference as the biennial reports to the Southern Christian Convention contain adequate summaries of the actions of the Trustees.

⁴⁷ *Annual 1960*, 53.

Chapter XII

Denominational Development

With slavery abolished in the United States, hopefully forever, the Reconstruction period which followed the Civil War ended in 1877; and with the subject of states' rights relegated to the background for a time, the deep sectional wounds in both North and South slowly began to heal. Quite properly, the olive branch of peace soon began to wave in the Christian Church and the Southern Christian Convention at its 1882 session appointed "Revs. D. A. Long, M. B. Barrett, J. W. Wellons, and D. J. Kernodle, Esq.,"¹ to carry fraternal greetings to the American Christian Convention at its forthcoming meeting in Albany, New York. The mission was accomplished with such amicable results that the Southern Convention appointed W. S. Long, W. G. Clements, J. W. Wellons, J. P. Barrett, M. B. Barrett, W. W. Staley, and P. T. Klapp, ministers, and F. O. Moring, a layman, to attend the next quadrennial session of the American Christian Convention in 1886. This meeting was held at New Bedford, Massachusetts, and D. A. Long was elected president of the Convention.² While Long attended the Massachusetts meeting as a delegate from Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio, he was reared in the Christian Church in his native North Carolina, and the election of a southerner to the office of chief executive was a highly significant move toward Christian unity.

Although the reports of the fraternal delegates were encouraging, the Southern Christian Convention remained undecided as to whether it should cooperate with the northern organization in an effort to create one body of the Christian churches in the United States or remain aloof from such an association as it had done since the rupture of 1854. However, the Southern Convention realized that the

time for decisive action had arrived and the future policy of the southern Christian Church must be decided one way or another. The 1890 session of the Convention at Suffolk, Virginia, was the logical time for resolving the problem. On the first day of the meeting P. H. Fleming moved that the Convention act as a Committee of the Whole "to consider the propriety of sending delegates to the American Christian Convention, which meets at Marion, Indiana, next October." This motion was carried and R. A. Ricks was appointed chairman of the Committee. E. E. Holland then moved that the Convention recommend that all its member conferences and delegates and the president of the Convention be requested to attend the 1890 meeting at Marion. J. W. Wellons, D. A. Long, E. L. Moffitt, J. L. Foster, C. J. Jones, R. A. Ricks, M. L. Hurley, W. S. Long, W. T. Herndon, W. W. Staley, P. H. Fleming, A. Savage, and others discussed the motion, after which it was approved by the Convention.³ With this action the Southern Christian Convention decided in favor of national union and permanently rejected sectional isolation.

The southern representatives who attended the Indiana meeting were W. W. Staley, A. Savage, W. S. Long, M. L. Hurley, J. W. Wellons, and J. P. Barrett. They were enthusiastically received and each courteously introduced and given the privilege of making a few remarks. J. P. Barrett made the presentation to the Convention president of a walking cane made from a sill of the old Lebanon Church in Surry County, Virginia, which was accepted with a "burst of applause." The announcement was then made that a Plan of Union would be drawn up and presented to the Convention for action on the next day. The action which followed can best be comprehended by the details included in the account Editor J. P. Barrett wrote for the *Christian Sun*:

. . . The next morning the report was made to the body and adopted unanimously amid great enthusiasm. The motion to adopt the report was made by Rev. E. Mudge of Michigan and seconded by Rev. D. E. Millard, also of Michigan. Bro. Mudge stated that a Michigan man made the motion for division in 1854 and it gave him pleasure to make the motion for union in 1890. Bro. Millard stated that his father seconded the motion for division and he felt great joy in seconding the motion for union. The vote was taken in great enthusiasm and deep feeling. Then it was stated that the lamented N. Summerbell, D.D., had a leading part in the division, and his aged widow came forward and spoke a few words tenderly on the blessed results. Many eyes in the vast audience were dim with tears and joy ran high. Rev. W. B. Wellons, D.D., as is well known took an active part in the fight at Cincinnati, O., in 1854. He has long since gone to his reward, but his brother, Rev. J. W. Wellons was present, and it was said by some that he wore the happiest face in the congregation in

the time of the general hand shaking which followed the consummation of the union.⁴

The Plan of Union was drawn up by the following Sub-Committee of the American Convention: J. T. Phillips, J. B. Weston, D. A. Long, D. E. Millard, C. A. Tillinghast, and A. H. Morrill. Its provisions were as follows:

In response to the above sentiment, our brethren from the South through their representatives, desire to be admitted in the manner indicated by the *following*, to wit:

The General Convention of the Christian Church (South) agrees to send delegates to the American Christian Convention, upon the following condition, to wit:

1st. That the General Convention of the Christian Church maintain its autonomy in every sense undisturbed.

2d. That the General Convention of the Christian Church shall be bound by no action of the American Christian Convention to which it has not given its official consent.

3d. That the Southern delegates shall have the right to vote in the American Christian Convention only upon subjects which their convention has approved or does approve, by their vote, which vote shall be subject to the ratification of the General Convention itself.

Board of Commissioners from the Southern Convention.—W. W. Staley, A. Savage, J. P. Barrett, D.D., W. S. Long, D.D., M. L. Hurley, J. W. Wellons.

The union with the Christian Union body has been more and more recognized, and it received important advance by a meeting recently held in Springfield, Ohio, where fresh action was taken to which your committee have given their formal approval. It is as follows:

1. The Holy Bible our only rule of faith and practice.
2. Christ, the only Head of the Church.
3. Christian character the only test of fellowship.
4. Individual interpretation of Scripture the right and duty of all.
5. The union of all the followers of Christ without controversy.
6. Each local church governs itself.⁵

All of the cardinal principles which were sacred to the Church in the South were embraced in the Plan except the proviso that "Christian is the only appellation needed," but the mutual use of this name seemed to be taken for granted. The recognition of these principles, which the southern Church had long struggled to preserve and defend, removed any possibility of divisive doctrinal or theological concepts between the two Churches; and no mention of political matters was made in the Plan at all. The conditions were thus acceptable to the Southern Commission, and the resulting action of the Convention was jubilantly reported by Editor Barrett:

The report was unanimously adopted and the united body proceeded to work. In a short while the report on union between the Christians and the 'Christian Union' brethren of the West was made and adopted. Thus the union of the church North, South and West greatly adds to the power and resources of the main body, and the future of the body looms up with brighter prospects than ever before.⁶

With the adoption of the Plan of Union in 1890, the Christian Churches of the North and South were reunited in purpose, although this action did not create a single national denomination of the Christians. Both the northern and southern Conventions retained their autonomy, as no central government was established with jurisdiction over the entire Christian membership. The American Convention made no change in its structure, but the southern organization's name was changed to "The General Convention of the Christian Church, South." The new formal title was rarely used except on official records as the old name continued to be used almost universally; and when the organization was incorporated in 1924, it officially became "The Southern Christian Convention" again.

The principal purpose of the agreement which had been reached at the Albany meeting in 1882 was to combine the efforts and resources of both Conventions in a joint promotion of missions, evangelism, publications, and other programs in order to produce more effective results. The greater accomplishments made possible by a union of organizational strength in the fields of missions and education for the blacks had already become apparent. The goal of the Christians in their 1890 legislation was to extend this cooperative effort into additional fields.

Unfortunately, the action of the Convention was not universally construed in its true light, as shown by this article from the *Christian Sun*:

The following appeared in the *Spirit of the Age* of this city of which the Rev. R. H. Whitaker, D.D., is editor in its issue of Oct. 17, 1890.

We notice the statement that the Southern wing of the Christian Church which seceded in 1854, has re-united with the Church North. The despatch making the announcement says: 'The conditions of the return of the Southern people having been agreed to, an informal and hearty greeting was extended to the erring brothers, while the congregation sung, 'Blest be the tie that binds.'

It's none of our business, but we don't relish that pompous piosity that has the conceit to call Southern Christians 'erring brothers.'

That was said by the man who reported the item—nothing of the sort was said in the Convention at Marion. Neither was it a going back on the part of the Southern brethren—it was simply

a Union of two bodies of Christian—they came together, that is all. The Board of Commissioners were cordially received and kindly entertained.⁷

Editor Barrett's contemptuous retort was justified by the events at the Marion Convention, where everything possible had been done to erase the memories of the secession of 1854. Such criticism irritated but did not impede the Christian Church in the South which had taken a forward step of great significance and had forged ahead with its enlarged opportunities for Christian service.

Interest in their mutual affairs was immediately accelerated in the northern and southern Churches. The following list of Church officials and distinguished visitors attended the 1894 meeting of the Southern Christian Convention in Norfolk, Virginia:

Rev. C. J. Jones, D.D., presented the names of the Executive Board of the American Christian Convention, viz.: Rev. D. A. Long, D.D., President A.C.C., Yellow Springs, Ohio; Rev. J. J. Summerbell, D.D., Secretary A.C.C., Lewisburg, Pa.; Hon. F. A. Palmer, Treasurer A.C.C., New York City; Rev. J. G. Bishop, Secretary Mission Board, Dayton, Ohio; Rev. Martyn Summerbell, D.D., President of Correspondence College and Secretary of Education, Lewiston, Me.; Rev. H. J. Duckworth, Secretary of Publications A.C.C., Mt. Sterling, Ohio; Rev. J. F. Burnett, secretary of Sunday schools, A.C.C. Eaton, Ohio; and also the names of the following visiting brethren, viz: Rev. James Maple, D.D., Milford, N. J.; Rev. J. P. Watson, D.D., Editor Herald of Gospel Liberty, Dayton, Ohio; Rev. Geo. E. Merrill, Publishing Agent, Dayton, Ohio; Rev. T. M. McWhinney, D.D., Marion, Ind.; Rev. Byron Long, Marion, Ind.; Rev. N. Del McReynolds, Urbana, Ohio; Rev. F. S. Child, of the Congregational Church, Fairfield, Conn.; Hon. Frank McWhinney, Greenville, Ohio; Rev. C. W. Garoutte, Ripley, Ohio; Rev. C. N. Donaldson, of the Baptist Church, Norfolk, Va.; Rev. W. F. Watson, Spurgeon Memorial Church, Norfolk, Va.

The President received the Board and visitors, and on behalf of the Convention welcomed them to seats with us and to take part in our deliberations.⁸

At the same session W. W. Staley, E. T. Isley, J. D. Elder, J. W. Patton, S. P. Read, and W. S. Long were appointed to attend the 1894 session of the American Christian Convention at Haverhill, Massachusetts.⁹

The Christian Church in the South lost no time in taking advantage of its enlarged opportunities. When W. W. Staley was appointed to the American Christian Convention's Committee on the Hymn Book, the 1890 Southern Convention endorsed the appointment "with instructions to draw from our Hymn Book as one of the sources of compilation."¹⁰ At the 1894 session of the Southern Convention the Committee on Publications suggested "the wisdom of united effort

between this body and the American Christian Convention in their respective publishing departments," which hopefully would yield "the production of a permanent and influential church literature." The Committee report also recommended the use of "the Sunday school publications of the Christian Publishing Association, of Dayton, Ohio, as well adapted to our needs and worthy of our support."¹¹ The acceptance of this proposal relieved the southern Church of the financial struggle it had labored under in attempting to produce most of its own literature. This beneficial change enabled the Convention in 1904 to become the owner of the *Christian Sun* which, though Church endorsed, had formerly been published as a private enterprise. The periodical was then leased to J. O. Atkinson, who had served as its editor since 1898. In 1907 J. P. Barrett, a former editor of the paper, was elected to the editorship of *The Herald of Gospel Liberty*, the official organ of the American Christian Convention.¹² In these, as in many other respects, the interests of both Conventions developed into mutual projects.

In 1890 D. A. Long had been elected to his second term as president of the American Christian Convention. At the same session the organization unanimously approved a proposal to construct a church building in Norfolk, Virginia, as a joint enterprise shared by both Conventions "To commemorate the reunion of the Christian North and South after a separation of thirty-four years." The Southern Convention, in session at Elon College in 1892, accepted its \$10,000 share of the cost and included the following in its decision:

RESOLVED, That this convention perpetuate the record of its co-operation in a work of such magnitude and importance by proposing to the Executive committee of the American Christian Convention, that this convention will unite with that body in the purchase of the large central window of Cathedral glass at an expense of \$500.00 and that the name of the Southern General Christian Convention, and The American Christian Convention be engraved on the window as a perpetual memorial of our united effort in the erection of the Union Memorial Christian church in the city of Norfolk, Va.

RESOLVED, 2, That this Convention endorse the action of the local board of trustees in authorizing C. J. Jones as financial agent to visit Conferences and churches North and South and secure funds for this purpose in harmony with the best approved plans.

TRUSTEES of the Union Memorial
Christian church of Norfolk, Va.¹³

The completed edifice, known as the Memorial Christian Temple, was dedicated in 1894 and "became the leading missionary church in the denomination, holding that distinction for many years."¹⁴

A large delegation from the South attended the American Convention's 1898 session at Newmarket in Ontario, Canada. At that

meeting the decision was made to hold the next quadrennial session at Norfolk, Virginia. N. G. Newman, J. O. Atkinson and W. P. Lawrence were appointed by the Southern Convention in 1902 to act as a committee on arrangements and raise the six hundred dollars necessary for the entertainment of the delegates.¹⁵ The needed sum was secured and with it the cooperation of the residents of Norfolk in extending their bountiful hospitality to the seven hundred visitors from the ninety conferences which composed "the largest convention ever held." The sixty conferences that made reports to the Secretary of the Convention represented 1,348 ordained ministers, 190 unordained ministers, and 101,597 church members, which gives an approximation of the size of the Christians' strength at the time.¹⁶

Editor Atkinson reported the session in the *Christian Sun*, expressing his joy in meeting men of "great minds, great souls," who had thoughts and ideas of inspirational value. Although he wryly commented that the discussion over the method of electing officers "was not as 'sweet in spirit' as we could have wished—sweet enough possibly, had there not been so much of it," he confidently predicted that "The entire Southern church will be stronger, better, happier for having had such a guest as the American Christian Convention." He included an enlightening commentary on the functions of a Convention, a portion of which stated:

. . . This body, interested in a great building, only supplies the general design and then selects officers, boards and workmen to construct and complete the building. This body does not come together to build. It is too large and unwieldy for that. It came together to map out, design and turn the execution over into the hands of safe and prudent and faithful mechanics, artisans and builders. The Convention in session prepares the way. During the interval of four years the actual, practical, aggressive work goes on. Herein then this Convention differs from all our conferences. Our conferences do their work and finish their business in session assembled. This Convention in session assembled only provides that its work shall be done for the next four years and says who shall have charge of that work. The real, actual, practical work does not stop, therefore, when the Convention adjourns. It only begins then. The Reports from the various Boards and Secretaries rendered during the session of the Convention show what work has been done through the agency of the Convention.¹⁷

Although the official Proceedings of the Convention at Norfolk filled twenty-two printed pages, the greatest effect of the meeting on the southern Church was more clearly discernible in Atkinson's report. No more appropriate place for the session could have been found than the Memorial Christian Temple, and the bonds between the northern and southern churches were greatly strengthened by holding the 1902 session in the South.

From this time on the sessions of the American Christian Convention were regularly attended by a delegation from the Southern Convention, which was also liberally represented by the inclusion of some of its members on the programs and among the American Christian Convention's officials. The two organizations shared jointly in numerous enterprises and maintained a close relationship in that respect; otherwise, each Convention concentrated on its own responsibilities. The Christians in the South were thoroughly absorbed with their programs, as the years between 1889 and 1910 were perhaps the period of their most significant accomplishments. Elon College opened in 1889; the Christian Orphanage was opened in 1907; the Missions program was nurtured; Convention ownership of the *Christian Sun* was arranged; and relations with the northern Christians were renewed. Throughout the second decade of the nineteenth century the task faced was that of preserving this foundation and building a greater, more useful Church upon it. In 1902 the church property was valued at \$224,585, with 81 ordained ministers and 12 licentiates in its 182 churches. The Church was small as compared with the leading southern denominations, but its members were dedicated and they worked valiantly to expand and grow. World War I interfered with this effort, as it did with many things, but by 1920 the Church in North and South had recovered from the upsetting conditions caused by the military conflict, and the American Christian Convention was invited to hold its 1922 session in the First Christian Church at Burlington, North Carolina.

The invitation was accepted and on October 16, 1922, delegates from North, South, East and West began to arrive in large numbers. The following day one hundred and thirty-five arrived on a special railroad train from Cincinnati, Ohio. The resources of Burlington were taxed to accommodate such a large gathering, but George Otis Lankford, pastor of the host church, and his assistants received the gracious cooperation of the citizens and the other churches of the city, and all were properly entertained. Many of the delegates had never visited the South before and were charmed with southern hospitality, which included free transportation available in many automobiles marked "A.C.C."; and boys from the church helped with baggage, ran errands, and gave directions when needed. One interesting feature of the entertainment was the opportunity to visit a cotton field, and most of the large number of delegates who made this trip returned proudly carrying a boll of cotton which they had picked. Another interesting highlight was the frequent singing of the Convention Hymn composed by Albert B. Kendall, a former pastor of the Burlington church. Another innovation on the program was the holding of a session at nearby Elon College, the first time the Convention had ever as-

sembled in one of the Church's educational institutions.¹⁹

Platform speakers from the southern Church included W. C. Wicker and W. A. Harper, both of Elon College, and H. Shelton Smith, an alumnus of Elon College and a recent graduate of Yale University. The latter's address on the subject "An Adequate Program of Religious Education" was especially challenging and concluded with the statement: "The present generation is the one we can reach. If we train, hold and inspire them, the future will be radiant with hope." As a result of the emphasis placed on education by Smith and other delegates, the Convention combined the Boards of Education, Sunday School, and Christian Endeavor and created the office of Secretary of Christian Education to direct the new agency. W. A. Harper was elected unanimously to this new office.²⁰ This was a pioneer step in Christian education at that time.

The report of the Commission on the State of the Church contained the following interesting statistics:

. . . The report of the commission on State of the Church was adopted with the amendments to create two new departments, that of evangelism and life-work recruits. In this report the goal was set for new members as 27,000 for the next quadrennial. This report showed the total membership of the Christian Church in North America to be 96,296, a total number of 1,159 churches, 1008 ministers, total number enrolled in Sunday school 94,000, and 372 life-work recruits.²¹

The real keynote of the session was contained in the quadrennial address of F. G. Coffin, the Convention president:

In outlining the future program of the Christian Church as represented by this convention President Coffin gave four essential principles upon which the work must be based as follows:

1. "To hold what we have already secured and continue what we have so well begun."
2. "To enlarge the borders of our church habitation."
3. "To stimulate the lives of our people to an adequate expression."
4. "To give us a denominational cohesion."²²

Unity became the central theme of the Convention after Coffin's address. J. E. West, the Lieutenant Governor of Virginia at the time, who attended the session as a delegate, delivered "a rousing speech" which prompted the Convention to approve the changing of the constitution of the Church to read "The Christian Church" instead of "A religious body known as Christians."²³ The Convention also adopted the proposal of the Commission on Christian Unity:

That it hereby makes loving overtures to all true Christians everywhere, of whatever name or order, to unite by legal incorporation, placing all interests now owned and controlled by said

Convention under the ownership and control of the amalgamated organization . . .

But the convention at this session took two more steps in the direction of Christian unity; that of voting to appoint a permanent Commission on Christian Unity whose duty it will be to make and receive overtures looking toward complete unity of the Church of Christ; and to arrange a program of study in Christian Unity for use in the Sunday schools, Christian Endeavor Societies, and other groups.²⁴

With the passage of this legislation, the Christian Church, South, entered into governmental union with the American Christian Convention. The name of the latter body was changed to "The General Convention of the Christian Church in the United States" and represented a Church which had become a *bona fide* religious denomination in every sense of the word.

The Southern Christian Convention remained the central governing body of the Christian Church in the South, for it was the Convention which united with the American Christian Convention in 1922 and not individual conferences or churches. To clarify this position, a Special Committee on Relations was appointed and its recommendations approved at the 1924 session of the Southern Convention. Financial cooperation was guaranteed with the General Convention, formerly the American, as long as all negotiations were made through the Southern organization and not directly to the conferences and churches. This included obligations to the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, "and such other inter-denominational organizations as the General Convention, in regular session, may assume."²⁵ The legislation also provided that no actions of the General Convention would be binding upon the Southern organization until ratified by that body. This statement of policy removed the cause for any possible misunderstanding, and the two Conventions, including their member-conferences and churches, continued to work harmoniously with each other.

In order to facilitate its expanding program financially and in other ways, the Southern Christian Convention decided incorporation was advisable. Accordingly, the Executive Board of the Convention met on May 21, 1924, and approved the following plan presented by a Special Committee:

1. The name of this corporation is "Southern Christian Convention, Inc."
2. The location of the principal office is at Alamance Building, in the town of Elon College, County of Alamance.
3. The objects for which this corporation is formed are as follows:
 - (a) To organize and maintain Church and Church enterprises in America or any other country.

(b) To promote the cause of education and to maintain colleges, schools and seminaries.

(c) To promote, encourage and maintain the cause of Christian missions.

(d) To provide and maintain homes for orphaned or destitute children, aged or infirm ministers, their wives or widows, or otherwise provide for them.

(e) To publish and circulate such newspapers, magazines, periodicals, books or other literature, or other means of communication, and to engage in, operate or perform any other activity or enterprise that it may deem advisable.

And in order properly to prosecute the objects and purposes above set forth, the corporation shall have full power and authority to purchase, lease, and otherwise acquire, hold, mortgage, convey and otherwise dispose of all kinds of property, both real and personal, both in this State and in all other States, Territories and dependencies of the United States and any other country or countries, and generally to perform all acts which may be deemed necessary for the proper and successful prosecution of the objects and purposes for which the corporation is created.

4. The corporation is to have no capital stock, and is not organized for profit.

5. The names and post office addresses of the incorporators are as follows: G. O. Lankford, Burlington, N. C.; W. A. Harper, Elon College, N. C.; D. R. Fonville, Burlington, N. C.; W. K. Holt, Burlington, N. C.; Mrs. W. B. Sellars, Burlington, N. C.; Chas. D. Johnston, Elon College, N. C.; N. G. Newman, Elon College, N. C.; W. P. Lawrence, Elon College, N. C.; J. O. Atkinson, Elon College, N. C.

6. The period of existence of this corporation is unlimited.

7. Members other than the present members of the Southern Christian Convention may be admitted after organization, according to the Government and Principles of the Christian Church, or amendments thereto.²⁶

The plan was then submitted to the Secretary of State of North Carolina, promptly approved, and the charter of incorporation issued on May 24, 1924. With the consummation of this action, the Convention was in a better position than ever to proceed with the development of future activities, and the organization immediately made plans to do so.

Footnotes

- ¹ *Annual* 1883, 24.
- ² *Annual* 1887, 19, 25; Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 380.
- ³ *Annual* 1891, 25, 30.
- ⁴ *Sun*, October 23, 1890.
- ⁵ *Quadrennial Book* 1891, 173.
- ⁶ *Sun*, October 23, 1890.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁸ *Annual* 1895, 7.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 21.
- ¹⁰ *Annual* 1891, 32.
- ¹¹ *Annual* 1895, 20.
- ¹² Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 340, 381.
- ¹³ *Annual* 1893, 16.
- ¹⁴ Morrill, *Christian Denomination*, 263.
- ¹⁵ *Annual* 1902, 18, 32.
- ¹⁶ *Sun*, October 15 and 22, 1902.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸ *Annual* 1903, frontispiece.
- ¹⁹ *Sun*, November 2, 1922. Author's Note: I was one of the errand boys. D.T.S.
- ²⁰ *Sun*, November 16, 1922.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² *Ibid.*
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ *Annual* 1925, 22-23.
- ²⁶ *Annual* 1926, 12-18.

Chapter XIII

Denominational Activities

Temperance was one phase of moral conduct which the Christians began to advocate in the early years of their activity. The Eastern Virginia Conference proposed the formation of Temperance Societies in 1838 and within a few years had created a Committee on Temperance.¹ The North Carolina and Virginia Conference agreed in 1842 that "both ministers and members should use their influence to suppress the immoderate use of Ardent Spirits,"² and later appointed a committee to pursue the matter. No legislation binding upon the membership was passed by either conference; consequently, there was little that committees could do other than make recommendations, but they kept the subject alive. As a result the Southern Christian Convention, in 1894, changed its Temperance Committee to the Committee on Moral Reform, which included Temperance "and other moral reforms."³ This Committee soon ceased to function, and only an occasional reference to Temperance was made in the Convention until 1914. In that year a Special Committee on Temperance commended the law enforcement efforts of the State of North Carolina and rejoiced at the passage of the Enabling Act in Virginia, which allowed a referendum on state prohibition to be held. The veteran churchman, J. E. West, who was also a member of the Virginia Legislature, was credited with being an influential factor in the passage of the law. The slogan of the Anti-Saloon League, "A Saloonless Nation by 1920," was endorsed and the recommendation made that the work of the Special Committee be continued.⁴ This proposal was passed by the Convention, and the Committee on Temperance became a permanent part of the structure of the Southern Convention.

The functions of this Committee were by no means confined to the subject of alcoholic beverages, and the following report made in

1920 shows that the views of the Christians were not dissimilar to those of many other religious denominations at the time:

Since our last report National Prohibition has been written into the Constitution of the United States by the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment which went into effect January 16, 1920. Our next goal is world prohibition, which we hope to accomplish within the next ten years.

Law enforcement is now necessary to make effective what we have won, and we urge all our people to loyally support all prohibitory laws.

The desecration of the Sabbath is a growing evil and we urge our people to refrain from joy-riding and visiting for past time on that day. Reform is needed along many lines that life and health may be better preserved.

Parental authority fails to restrain the youth of our land as it was Divinely intended to do. Wild and extravagant ideas of life have taken the place of saner thoughts and customs of a past age.

We favor text-books on the nature and effects of alcohol for our public schools.

We view with deep concern the increase of juvenile parentage and the growing disregard of the marriage vow.

We favor doing all we can to discourage such things.

JEREMIAH W. HOLT,
E. T. HOLLAND,
C. H. STEPHENSON.⁵

This statement was approved and represented the general policy of the Convention during the 1920-1930 decade. It was supplemented in 1924 by the endorsement of the Woman's Law Enforcement League of America; and copies of the legislation were dispatched to the League, to President Coolidge, and to members of Congress "who represent the constituency composing this Convention."⁶

The ideals of the Convention were shattered in the ensuing decade by the repeal of national prohibition legislation, but the Committee on Temperance did not give up its struggle for moral uplift. In 1934 it made a lengthy report which explained that Temperance was concerned with far more practices than alcoholic consumption. It read:

The Bible clearly teaches such a meaning of temperance when it warns against gluttonous eating, riotous living, extravagant expending, gross conversation and filthy manners, in which cases the form of temperance is clearly self-control and self-restraint.⁷

Accordingly, recommendations were made to support all law enforcement, including the suppression of "such forms of gambling as slot machines and numbers racket," promote educational efforts on the dangers of alcoholic consumption, the disapproval of war and compulsory military training. The report also included this statement:

That we condemn the misleading and enticing advertisements of liquor and cigarettes, appearing upon our billboards, in magazines, over the radio; and the cunning and crafty efforts through some of the Sunday comic strips to attract and interest young people and children in these evils.⁸

Despite the broad view of Temperance found in the 1934 report, the main objective of the Committee remained the opposition to the use of intoxicating beverages, and the subsequent reports became gradually confined to that one subject. As other committees were created which assumed a portion of this work, the necessity for a separate organization to promote the matter became less necessary. Consequently, the last report of the Committee on Temperance was made to the Southern Convention at its 1944 session.⁹ While the Committee was reappointed for the next biennium, its activities ceased after this date, although the ideals for which it strove continued to be a part of the approved policy of the Christian Church.

During the 1924 session of the Southern Convention a Committee on Social Service was appointed, with duties closely akin to those of the Temperance Committee. Reappointment was made in 1926, with a variance in membership, but no report was made to the Convention until its 1928 session. At that time H. S. Hardcastle, V. E. Kit-chens, and J. W. Fix recommended and urged the following:

We should support and co-operate with every movement looking toward the establishment of Christian homes, the advancement of social education, the application of Christian principles to industry and economic life, the preservation of sex purity, the elimination of the appalling evils of divorce, the decrease of crime, the observance and enforcement of law, the cleansing of social life, the application of Christianity to political life, the abolishment of war, and the promotion of the spirit of brotherhood and good will among nations.¹⁰

As there was no department of Social Service in either the Southern or the American Convention, the committee could do little more than make recommendations, and this it continued to do.

In 1930 the Southern Convention was informed, "One thing is certain: there are many movies today which millions of people are seeing which are a menace to wholesome social life and which are ambassadors of misunderstanding and of ill will when sent to other countries." The Committee also stated, "War is mankind's collective sin against social welfare, and the Church must condemn it unequivocally and seek to develop and promote the spirit that will outlaw it in fact as well as theory." Furthermore, the Golden Rule had not been applied to its full extent in southern industry, which constituted "a challenge to the Church to interpret and apply the principles of Christ in industry." The report concluded with the observation that racial re-

lations had improved materially, but "There is a call for the practice of brotherhood."¹¹ By such frank statements and courageous recommendations the Committee promoted Social Service in the Christian Church as much as was possible.

In addition to Social Service a new promotion in the field of Missions was attempted. During the 1910 session of the Southern Christian Convention, and largely as a result of an emphatic address made by J. E. West, a committee was appointed to organize the Laymen's Missionary Movement of the Southern Christian Convention. The members were Samuel Earman, T. J. Green, W. W. Elder, W. H. Payne, J. U. Gunter, J. W. Manning, and W. P. Lawrence who was elected chairman. In 1916 N. F. Brannock succeeded Lawrence as chairman of the Movement.¹² The greatest accomplishment of this organization was to publicize Missions among the men of the Church. In doing so, the Movement became the real precursor of the Men and Millions Forward Movement authorized on January 12, 1920. The launching of the new enterprise was again largely due to a speech made by J. E. West in which he declared:

... that the hour had arrived for every member of the Christian Church to be given an opportunity to contribute to the general enterprises of the Church through an every-member canvass and for an effort to be made to interest all in the Kingdom's work.¹³

The objectives of the Forward Movement were to increase church membership, promote tithing, increase the number of life-workers in the Church, and raise money for all the enterprises of the Christians.

The campaign was highly organized with W. W. Staley, Isaac Walter Johnson, E. E. Holland, J. E. West, and K. B. Johnson, Directors. The Committee in charge was composed of J. O. Atkinson, chairman, C. B. Riddle, W. A. Harper, C. D. Johnston, and C. D. West. Promotional literature was published; campaign songs were written; and the Christians were stirred into a "spiritual revolution." In April, 1921, the Committee reported to the Convention, "Democracy in religion matched democracy in nation, in a genuine popular uprising to make the world safe for the cause of Christ through a co-operative effort to propagate that cause." Within an incredibly short time the Movement reported its accomplishments and the financial goals it set for the future:

Life-Work Recruits	217
Tithers	2,589
Additions to the Church	2,522
Regular Sources	1,700
Life-Dedication Week	822

Money Raised:

Special Mission Campaign	\$ 128,000.00
Elon Standardization Fund	381,600.00
From Regular Sources (to come in annually)	250,000.00
For Church Extension (to be reported annually) .	500,000.00
During Consecration Week	464,572.25
	<u>\$1,724,172.25¹⁴</u>

The Mission Campaign and the Elon Fund had already been raised, but the remaining balance depended upon pledges, payable over a period of several years, and upon each church meeting its assigned quota in full. The economic depression which shortly followed this jubilant report of 1920 prevented the collection of the entire amount, but the treasurer reported that payments of \$148,919.36 were made by 1926.¹⁵ Regardless of the fact that the high goal attempted was not fully reached, the money that was collected might not otherwise have been raised and it was put to good use in the Church's program. In addition, the church membership had risen to a total of 28,730 in 1924, and this increase was largely a result of the Movement's campaign.¹⁶ Perhaps the most far-reaching achievement of all was the revival of the Christians' interest in the work of their Church, and this was clearly manifested during the remaining years of the decade. The Men and Millions Movement made an invaluable contribution to the Christian Church, and those who labored to promote it rendered a praiseworthy service to the denomination.

Publications had long been a subject uppermost in the plans of the Christians, and they received their share of attention and promotional effort. At the 1892 session of the Southern Christian Convention the resignation of J. P. Barrett as Publishing Agent was announced, and W. G. Clements was elected to replace him. The latter relinquished the office in 1896, and the Convention appointed E. L. Moffitt and M. L. Hurley to serve jointly as Publishing Agents. During the same session a proposal was approved for the Convention to establish a Publishing House and to purchase the *Christian Sun*.¹⁷ In 1900 W. P. Lawrence was elected to the office of Publishing Agent and authority was granted to him and J. O. Atkinson to establish the Book Depository of the Southern Christian Convention "upon their own responsibility." The Depository was to be located at Elon College where it would handle the school books for the institution and "disseminate our own publications and any other good literature."¹⁸

The Depository advertised the books it handled through the columns of the *Christian Sun*. Biennial sales reported in 1902 were almost \$1,500, and in 1906 about \$800, which represented a considerable number of volumes sold when the prices prevalent at the time are taken into consideration. The following were listed for sale in 1906:

. . . Among the books now on deposit are Bibles and Testaments from Nelson, Oxford, and Holman publishing houses, a collection of half dozen variety of Sunday School song books, Christian Hymnary for use in our churches, Wellon's Family Prayer, Mother's Answered Prayer, by Rev. P. H. Fleming; Scripture Doctrine, by J. J. Summerbell; Fruit Bearing Truths; and Iola or Facing the Truth, by Rev. J. P. Barrett, D.D.; Herbert Brown, by Rev. O. B. Whitaker; That They All May Be One, by Amos R. Wells; Our Children in Heaven, by Rev. James Maple; Government and Principles of the Christian Church, and some other smaller publications. In addition, we have an arrangement with publishers whereby we can secure at a reduced price any book of religious topic published in our language.¹⁹

Agent Lawrence resigned on March 6, 1903, and was succeeded by J. O. Atkinson, who reported to the 1910 Convention that the Depository was publishing books in addition to selling them. He referred to 2,000 copies of the revised *Principles and Government* and Volume I of the *Teacher Training Course*. Volume II of the latter was then being printed and also MacClenny's biography of James O'Kelly. In addition the Agent stated that "The Depository is prepared to furnish any religious book published that customers may desire."²⁰

As a result of the success of the venture, the Convention of 1912 approved a proposal to establish the Southern Christian Publishing Company to be located at Elon College. On August 12, 1912, a corporate charter was issued by the State of North Carolina authorizing a total capital of \$100,000 for the company, with \$250 paid in by Publication Board members Charles A. Hines of Greensboro, North Carolina; I. W. Johnson of Suffolk, Virginia; W. T. Walters of Winchester, Virginia; and W. C. Wicker and J. O. Atkinson, both of Elon College, North Carolina. Work was immediately begun on a brick two-story home for the company at Elon College, and the printing press was in operation in 1913. In a short time the organization began publishing the *Christian Sun*, the *Elon College Catalogue and Quarterly Bulletin*, and the *Elon College Weekly*, in addition to "many pamphlets of superior merit, and a general commercial line of work."²¹ Church and Sunday School material was also published by the company.

An interesting sidelight of the legislation that authorized the publishing venture was a proposal that a claim be made against the Federal Government for damages caused by the destruction of the original Publishing House at Suffolk, Virginia, during the Civil War. An investigation of the subject was made by consulting attorneys on the matter, but the final decision was that although the Union Army caused the destruction, "we did not deem it feasible to undertake at this time to recover damage."²²

Although the directors of the Southern Christian Publishing Company were elected from a list of nominees supplied by the Southern

Convention, the organization was a private enterprise, dependent upon making a financial profit in order to exist. Publication has always been an expensive and speculative undertaking, and church periodicals usually have to be subsidized, generally by the sponsoring Church, in order to remain solvent. This proved to be true of the new Christian venture, except there were no subsidies forthcoming. Atkinson resigned as editor of the *Christian Sun* in 1916, after the paper had been substantially reduced in size; he was succeeded by C. B. Riddle. In the same year the Company reported a net operational loss of \$5,000, after which the Southern Convention leased the *Christian Sun* to Editor Riddle. The headquarters of the paper were moved to Burlington, North Carolina, on April 1, 1918. A profitable arrangement was concluded with the Christian Publishing Association of Dayton, Ohio, to purchase church and Sunday School literature, and the efforts of the southern Church to publish such literature were abandoned. The Company proposed to publish a history of the Christian Church written by W. S. Long when 500 pre-publication orders of \$1.00 each had been received. Evidently, the needed sum was never received, and the book, which would have been of inestimable value to the southern Christians, was never published. Unable to operate profitably, the Southern Christian Publishing Company closed its doors during World War I, and its building at Elon College was devoted to other purposes.²³

In 1920 the Southern Convention established a Board of Superannuation, thereby expressing its concern for its ministers who had reached the age of seventy. The various conferences composing the Convention were requested to place any money they had raised for such a purpose into a common fund which would be doubled by a matching sum from the Men and Millions Movement. At the age of seventy, or earlier in case of disability, any minister of the Convention who had served for a period of twenty years would be entitled to assistance. Single men were to receive \$200 annually; married men, \$300; widows, \$200 "during their widowhood and membership in the Christian Church"; and dependents were also to be cared for financially. The initial membership of the Board consisted of J. O. Atkinson, W. M. Jay, K. B. Johnson, B. D. Jones, and W. K. Holt.²⁴ Payments to the aged began within a short time, although funds became available slowly. In 1928 the Board investigated the possibility of a group life insurance plan for the Convention but rejected it as not being feasible at the time.²⁵ Although the fund grew slowly, it grew consistently, and during the 1930-1932 biennium the Board was able to pay \$4,753.61 to aid those entitled to receive it.²⁶ After the merger with the Congregational Church, superannuation was included in a new Church agency, and the Board was dissolved.

The annual income of the Board was derived from a Convention budget apportionment, the Christmas Fund, and a small savings investment. After the 1931 merger this income was forwarded to the Division of Ministerial Relief of the Board of Home Missions of Congregational Christian Churches, which supplemented the sum and disbursed it. Board Chairman DeRoy R. Fonville reported to the Convention that for the years 1950-51 \$9,494.04 was remitted to the Division of Ministerial Relief, and \$17,235.00 was disbursed to retired and disabled clergymen and the widows of ministers. The report concluded with an endorsement of the Revisions Committee "whereby the work of the Board of Superannuation and the Mission Board may be combined." This action was taken and the Board dissolved. After the United Church of Christ was organized an Annuity Fund and a Retirement Plan for both ministers and lay workers were created to aid the aged or disabled church servants.²⁷

As the nineteenth century advanced, the various conferences which composed the Southern Convention had set up funds to give financial aid to ministerial students to help them in obtaining their education. The Convention had also given assistance of this kind through its agencies, but none of the efforts had achieved very extensive results. In view of this situation, in 1920 the Convention's Board of Education recommended that the funds of the conferences and of the Convention be pooled under the custody of the treasurer of Elon College, and that the Board "be empowered to order the loan of these funds upon the recommendation of the various conferences."²⁸ Upon the passage of this proposal, Thomas C. Amick, treasurer of the College, became the Custodian of the Fund. Two years later Amick reported that notes and cash totaling \$5,533.91 had been paid into the account, although nothing had been received from either the Men and Millions Movement or the Eastern Virginia Conference.²⁹

The disastrous fire at Elon College in 1923 destroyed the Custodian's records, but Amick reconstructed them with a high degree of accuracy and reported assets of \$9,982.77 to the 1924 session of the Convention. Almost as fast as cash came into the Fund it was disbursed for educational assistance; and the assets consisted almost entirely of the notes owed by the recipients, as they were expected to repay the money after their education had been completed. The sums owed ranged from a maximum of \$900 to a minimum of \$50 in 1924.³⁰ During the ensuing six years the Fund grew, as shown by these figures:

Year	Notes Owed To Fund	Cash and Bonds	Total
1926	\$ 8,805.38	\$2,955.97	\$11,761.35
1928	10,219.11	2,575.00	12,794.11
1930	11,178.89	1,725.00	12,903.89

In 1930 Amick notified the Convention of his resignation from the Elon staff; and at his request A. T. West, the assistant business manager of the College, was elected to succeed him as Custodian.³¹ After the union with the Congregationalists, the Fund was merged into the functions of another Church agency and ceased to exist under its former identity.

The failure to publish the Long manuscript was one of the factors which made the Christians aware that their history had been neglected, and they sought to rectify the matter in 1922 by establishing the office of Southern Convention Historian. W. E. MacClenny was an appropriate choice for the first man to fill the post.³² Reports from the new official were included in the Convention programs after this date and made a part of the printed record. In 1926 the library at Elon College was designated as "the official depository of printed reports and periodicals of the Convention," and orders were given to bind the existing copies of the *Christian Sun*. A report was made at the same session that bronze memorial tablets had already been placed on a wall of the Alamance Building at Elon College in honor of William Samuel Long and John Pressley Barrett. The Convention was also informed that a granite marker, to cost \$850, was being prepared for erection in Surry County, Virginia, to contain the following inscription:

This monument marks the site of Lebanon Church, where the founders of the Christian Church, who had declared for religious liberty and accepted the Bible as their only creed, on August 4, 1794, adopted the name 'Christian,' to the exclusion of all party or sectarian names. Erected by the Southern Christian Convention in 1926.

The reverse side of the marker appropriately would contain the following:

Principles of the Christian Church

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only head of the Church.
2. Christian is a sufficient name for the Church.
3. The Holy Bible a sufficient rule of faith and practice.
4. Christian character a sufficient test of fellowship and membership.
5. The right of private judgment and liberty of conscience a right and privilege of all.³³

Also in 1926 the convention voted to raise \$1,275 to pay for a 16,000 pound granite monument honoring James O'Kelly. The site chosen for the memorial was the center of the campus at Elon College, and the unveiling ceremonies were held on October 16, 1929, "in the presence of a large concourse of people."³⁴ From this beginning, with its conscience awakened to the importance of historical matters, the Christian Church engaged in an increasing number of enterprises in this field and made commendable progress in each.

The Southern Convention, in its 1920 session, authorized the Board of Religious Education to employ a Field Secretary, and Miss Lucy M. Edlredge was appointed to begin the work on July 8, 1921. This efficient Christian administrator plunged energetically into her duties; and at the conclusion of her first nine and three quarter months in office she had traveled 6,221 miles, delivered 74 addresses, written 603 personal letters, besides mailing out 2,233 circular letters and 1,862 pieces of printed material. In addition, she had organized several new Sunday Schools and Christian Endeavor Societies, attended 10 Conferences and Conventions, held 18 institutes, and taught a class in Religious Education at the Seaside Chautauqua.³⁵

As a result of Miss Eldredge's capability she was elected to the office of "headquarters office secretary and field secretary of the young people's work of the Board of Religious Education of the General Convention," and she began her new duties on January 1, 1924, in Dayton, Ohio. At the same time Miss Pattie Lee Coghill was made a full time secretary of the Southern Christian Convention, with her services to be equally divided between the Board of Religious Education and the Woman's Mission Board.³⁶ The necessity for administrative assistance had become obvious to the Convention and, once it was provided, the program of the Church forged ahead at a faster pace.

Another field into which the Christian Church ventured was a summer studies program. In 1914 announcements were made of the "Seaside Chautauqua and School of Methods" to be held at Virginia Beach on July 20th through the 26th. W. H. Denison was president of the school and S. M. Smith, the secretary. The lecturers for the School included George R. Stuart, B. W. Spliman, Gypsy Smith, Jr., Albert Willis Lightbourne, and Martyn Summerbell. An additional attraction was the opportunity for surf bathing, fishing, and "afternoon outings."³⁷ The enterprise was successful and was repeated annually, with a different program each summer.

On July 18, 1917, the Executive Committee and the Home and Foreign Mission Boards of the Southern Christian Convention held a joint meeting at Virginia Beach "during the Seaside Chautauqua." Influenced by their report, the Southern Convention endorsed the Seaside Chautauqua as an excellent program for its membership. However, the inaccessibility of the Virginia resorts to a large portion of the Christians moved the Convention in its 1922 session to initiate the Chautauqua and School of Methods of the Southern Christian Convention with its meeting place designated as Elon College. Responsibility for organizing the program was delegated to the Board of Religious Education. As a result of immediate action, 43 adults and 50 children registered for the session held in August 1922.

The following summer 120 adults and 75 children attended the session, which had been changed to give "less time to lectures and more time to class-work."³⁸ As a result of this policy, the sessions were conducted more like a school and less like a formal lyceum program, with the emphasis on recreation less than it had been at the seashore. In the period 1924-1926 similar chautauquas were conducted at Bethlehem College in Alabama, in addition to those at Elon College. The faculty included James H. Lightbourne, Regional Director of Christian Education, and from the Dayton office Lucy M. Eldredge and her father, Hermon Eldredge, Editor of the Sunday School Literature for the Christian Church. The classes grew in size and popularity.³⁹

During the 1920's the Southern Convention's Board of Religious Education promoted the organization of Daily Vacation Bible Schools throughout the denomination. The effectiveness of this program was so satisfactory that the conducting of these schools became a permanent part of the annual activities of the Church, and have remained so since their introduction. The name of the Board was changed in 1926 to the Board of Christian Education, and because of the expansion of its program, on October 1, 1927, Miss Pattie Lee Coghill was employed as a full time secretary. Miss Coghill served in this capacity until January 1, 1929, and was succeeded in September of that year by Miss Jewel Truitt.⁴⁰ The financial problems of the Board were severe as the economic depression became more prevalent; this caused the program to be curtailed and payment for services cut to a "disgraceful sum." Miss Truitt resigned on September 1, 1931, and the chairman of the Board was forced to carry on the work as best he could without proper assistance.⁴¹ The Board is to be highly commended for being able to provide the training program, later called summer schools or conferences instead of chautauquas, each summer during this period of financial stress; it was still functioning, though handicapped, at the time of the Congregational-Christian merger.

In addition to summer programs, the Christian Church also ventured further in the field of general education. When the Southern Convention assembled at Burlington, North Carolina, in 1916, the report made by the Board of Education contained the following:

Our brethren in the Far-South, residing in the Georgia and Alabama Conferences, realizing the beneficent helpfulness Elon has been to our cause in this section and also realizing that they will never persuade the great majority of their students to come to Elon, and at the same time desiring to reach them in their formative years in an institution of our Church, petition this Convention to help them establish a preparatory school, eventually to become a college, in their midst.⁴²

This request was approved and the following trustees were appointed to make plans for the institution: G. O. Lankford, J. M. Welch, J. J. Carter, W. D. Mitchell, E. M. Carter, H. W. Elder, T. J. Holland, J. H. Harris, Walker Pearson, B. J. Earp, G. D. Hunt, T. H. Denney, J. W. Payne, J. H. Floyd, W. T. Beggs, and J. F. Hill. Virtually nothing was accomplished by this Board because of the interference of World War I, but the need for the school continued to exist and the project was revived by the Convention in 1920.⁴³

A new Board was appointed in that year, consisting of T. J. Holland, J. S. Stephenson, H. W. Elder, J. P. Barrett, E. M. Carter, Walker Pearson, J. W. Payne, W. D. Mitchell, W. W. Staley, L. E. Smith, C. H. Rowland, and W. A. Harper. Trustees Lankford, Harper and Smith were delegated to serve as a Special Committee on Charter, Site and Grade for the School.⁴⁴ These men were not hampered by the former adverse conditions and were able to inform the 1922 session of the Convention that Wadley, Alabama, had been selected as the site for the new school to be named Bethlehem College. John M. Hodge, a banker of Wadley and a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, donated 44.75 acres of land for the institution, which was accompanied by a subscription list totaling \$42,262.50. The school was to offer "for the first few years" an accredited high school course of four years and "the first two years of a standard college course."⁴⁵

Financial assistance from the Men and Millions Movements, added to the contributions of the people of Wadley, led to the erection of the first building, later named Kimball Hall; and the official opening ceremonies of the school were held on September 12, 1923. Fifty-one students enrolled for the first term. Marshall W. Hook served as president during the opening year. He was succeeded in 1924 by S. M. Beougher, who remained in office until 1930.⁴⁶

The incorporation of the Southern Christian Convention in 1924 enabled the organization to float bonds in order to raise funds, and \$100,000 worth were assigned to Bethlehem in 1926, although the college did not receive the money. Nevertheless, other funds were raised with which to construct Elder Hall and a home for the president. In 1926 the enrollment had climbed to 116 and the faculty numbered 10 instructors.⁴⁷

Financial problems multiplied for the young institution as funds were not received fast enough or in sufficient quantity to properly operate it. The value of the plant in 1928 was \$157,000, with an indebtedness of \$25,000. In the same year Bethlehem changed its name to Piedmont Junior College and became an affiliate of Piedmont College, located at Demorest, Georgia. This arrangement gave some re-

lief from the pressing financial stress and also enabled the school to broaden its scope of activities.⁴⁸

Frank E. Jenkins became president of the institution in 1930, serving until 1934. During his tenure of office the trustees changed the name of the institution to Southern Union College in recognition of the merger of the Congregational and Christian Churches. Unfortunately, changing the name did not solve financial problems which became acute during the national economic depression, and the college became bankrupt. However, after this regrettable situation was settled, the school was reincorporated as Southern Union College and resumed its fight for service and survival.⁴⁹

Progress was slowly, but surely, made during the administrations of the following executives: Ross Ensminger, 1934-1946; Paul F. Bechtold, 1946-1947; Fred P. Ensminger, 1947-1948; William C. Edge, 1948-1951; Clyde C. Flannery, 1952-1956; and Walter Alexander Graham, 1958-1964. Douglas Wasson served as acting president from 1956 until 1958. In that year the school was accepted into the American Association of Junior Colleges and its future brightened increasingly.⁵⁰

During President Graham's administration the Alabama State Legislature approved the founding of five junior colleges, with an initial expenditure of \$1,500,000 on each. The trustees of Southern met on August 14, 1963, and decided that state supported schools might prove to be disastrous competition to church supported colleges. To insure the preservation of their institution for future usefulness, the Board voted to offer Southern Union as a gift to the State of Alabama to constitute one of the proposed junior colleges.⁵¹ The offer was accepted, and on October 1, 1964, the transfer of all land, buildings and equipment was completed. Graham was retained as president under the new ownership; the institution was expanded; and the enrollment, which was 204 at the time of the transfer, continued to grow. The presentation of the college to the State should not be construed as a failure of the Church in the field of education but rather as the wisest means of guaranteeing that the efforts expended in Alabama should not have been in vain. The church could not compete with the government financially, so it gave its school to the State as a nucleus on which a greater institution could be built.

After the incorporation of the Southern Convention, the organization made plans to manage more efficiently the growing complexities of its various enterprises. In 1926 the decision was made that at each Convention session a Board of Policy and Finance should be appointed. Its duties were to "co-ordinate the financial program . . . by preparing a biannual budget for the different departments and board of the Convention," and to execute the policies of the Convention "in

its various relationships to the General Convention."⁵² The enactment of this legislation proved to be an advantageous step in handling the business of the Church, and it was followed within a few years by additional steps to improve the administration of the denominational program.

Also in this period the Southern Convention recognized the need for organizing its laymen and appointed a Special Committee on Men's Work to devise a plan for that purpose. In 1928 the Committee made a detailed report to the Convention proposing that an organization to be known as "Christian Church Men" be formed to create a greater working interest of the male membership in all of the activities of the Christian Church.⁵³ The recommendation was readily approved, but the attention of the churchmen was diverted from the plan at the time by the optimism over the imminent Congregational merger. With the knowledge that the union might necessitate many changes in organizations, it was deemed an unfavorable time to begin a new one. Consequently, the plans were allowed to lie dormant and eventually were discarded. Many years later the men in the Congregational Christian Church were organized under a new system.

Numerous activities of minor importance appeared on the agenda of the Southern Convention from time to time and were usually disposed of without controversy as a part of the organization's routine. One such case was a request in 1894 to combine the Deep River Conference with the North Carolina and Virginia organization, and then to divide the whole into three bodies. This was granted and the three new conferences were named the North Carolina and Virginia, the Western North Carolina, and the Eastern North Carolina. This new arrangement did not prove satisfactory and in 1918 the three Conferences joined in a petition to the Convention that they be allowed to merge into a single body to be named the North Carolina Christian Conference. Permission was granted and the consolidation was enacted, but the resulting organization also proved unsatisfactory. The 1922 Convention was informed, "Some objected because of the name, others because of the size of the united body, others for still other reasons." In order to find a remedy for this unhappy situation, a referendum was held in 1921 with the following interesting results:

For one Conference (14 churches)	40 votes
For two Conferences (11 churches)	28 votes
For three Conferences (60 churches)	141 votes
Not voting (33 churches)	72 votes
Total, 118 churches	279 votes

In response to this mandate the Convention was requested to restore the three Conferences to their original boundaries. D. R. Fonville, N. G. Newman and G. O. Lankford were appointed to act as a Special

Committee to confer with Conference officials "and work out an equitable plan of division."⁵⁴ Within a short time the status quo of the three Conferences was virtually restored, more or less to the satisfaction of all concerned, and the abortive attempt at consolidation was ended.

Another case was a petition in 1900 that a part of the Georgia and Alabama Christian Conference be formed into a new organization to expedite the handling of business. The creation of the Alabama Christian Conference from a part of the older body was the result.⁵⁵ An application for admission to the Convention was made in 1915 by the newly formed Delmarvia Christian Conference. The request was approved, but shortly afterward Delmarvia lost one of its principal leaders when A. W. Lightbourne died. The ministerial membership of the Conference had been small since its formation and, bereft of one of its foremost leaders, the decision was made by the Conference that their number was insufficient "to properly provide the necessary committees for the Conference work." Accordingly, Delmarvia was granted permission by the Convention to dissolve and to "allow individual churches and ministers the privilege of uniting with the Eastern Virginia Conference."⁵⁶

Requests for the Convention's assistance in solving conference problems were rare, as the local organizations usually proved quite capable of managing their own affairs. The agendas of their annual sessions were crowded with items of business to be transacted, as each conducted a full program on its own level. Often ideas originated in the conferences which were subsequently carried by their delegates to the Convention where they were adopted for the benefit of the entire Church. All of the Convention's legislation was thoroughly discussed in each conference before it was accepted and quite often the delegation to the next session of the Convention carried instructions to propose an alteration in some legislation or policy. The annals of each conference are filled with their activities, but all of their achievements were reflected in the work of the Southern Convention which was the central governing body of the Christian Church in the South.

During the four decades which preceded the 1931 merger of the Congregational and Christian Churches the Church in the South formulated many ambitious plans and undertook the operation of them as fast as the necessary funds and manpower were provided. Some had to be rejected or postponed. The denomination could not accomplish all that it wished to do though it strove wholeheartedly to achieve all that was possible. The enactment of the program was a hard task, for funds were difficult to raise and rarely available to the extent desired for the projects undertaken. The dedicated laity gave freely of its time, energy and resources. Administrators and executives worked hard, receiving low salaries when they might have re-

ceived higher remuneration elsewhere. Considering the fact that the Church was comparatively small in numbers, and that both World War I and the national depression of the late 1920's materially interfered with all church work in the United States, the Christians accomplished a great deal. In addition to evangelistic and moral benefits, one of the most consequential results of the Church program was the broadening of its ecumenical outlook which paved the way for a merger of denominations and a subsequent widening of the scope for its service to mankind. This forward step constituted the next phase in the life of the Christian Church.

Footnotes

- ¹ *Conferences*, 50.
- ² *Ibid*, 154.
- ³ *Annual* 1895, 11.
- ⁴ *Annual* 1915, 32-33.
- ⁵ *Annual* 1920, 15-16.
- ⁶ *Annual* 1925, 26.
- ⁷ *Annual* 1934, 25-26.
- ⁸ *Ibid*.
- ⁹ *Annual* 1944, 49-51.
- ¹⁰ *Annual* 1928, 38. See also, *Annual* 1925, 42, and *Annual* 1926, 56.
- ¹¹ *Annual* 1930, 32-33.
- ¹² *Annual* 1911, 13; *Annual* 1919, 36.
- ¹³ *Annual* 1921, 16.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid*, 21.
- ¹⁵ *Annual* 1926, 33.
- ¹⁶ *Annual* 1925, 17.
- ¹⁷ *Annual* 1893, 8; *Annual* 1897, 19, 24.
- ¹⁸ *Annual* 1901, 23.
- ¹⁹ *Annual* 1902, 11; *Annual* 1907, 51-52.
- ²⁰ *Annual* 1907, 3; *Annual* 1911, 17.
- ²¹ *Annual* 1915, 20-21.
- ²² *Ibid*.
- ²³ *Annual* 1917, 19-21, 30; *Annual* 1919, 15. The building, which was located on Trolinger Avenue, is no longer standing. Presumably the Long manuscript was lost in the 1923 fire at Elon College.
- ²⁴ *Annual* 1921, 49-50.
- ²⁵ *Annual* 1928, 18.
- ²⁶ *Annual* 1932, 12.
- ²⁷ *Annual* 1952, 54-55.
- ²⁸ *Annual* 1921, 42.
- ²⁹ *Annual* 1923, 40-41.
- ³⁰ *Annual* 1925, 32-33.
- ³¹ *Annual* 1926, 38; *Annual* 1928, 46; *Annual* 1930, 38-39.
- ³² *Annual* 1924, 28.
- ³³ *Annual* 1926, 31-32, 43; *Annual* 1928, 34.
- ³⁴ *Annual* 1930, 31. A full account of the ceremony was published in the "James O'Kelly Edition" of the *Christian Sun*, October 24, 1929. The monument is located in the center of the College quadrangle and has become Elon's best known landmark.
- ³⁵ *Annual* 1923, 42-43.
- ³⁶ *Annual* 1925, 34.
- ³⁷ *Sun*, June 3, 1914. The term "Chautauqua" originated at summer schools conducted at Chautauqua, New York, and came into popular usage at this time to represent any series of meetings which combined educational and recreational features.
- ³⁸ *Annual* 1919, 23; *Annual* 1923, 14, 44; *Annual* 1925, 34.
- ³⁹ *Annual* 1926, 38-39.
- ⁴⁰ *Annual* 1928, 57-58; *Annual* 1930, 35.
- ⁴¹ *Annual* 1932, 40.
- ⁴² *Annual* 1917, 19.
- ⁴³ *Annual* 1921, 42.

- ⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 48. See also, *The Southern Union College Catalogue*, 1963-1964, 23-25. Hereinafter cited as *Southern Catalogue*.
- ⁴⁵ *Annual* 1923, 26-27, 31.
- ⁴⁶ *Southern Catalogue*, 24.
- ⁴⁷ *Annual* 1926, 42-43.
- ⁴⁸ *Annual* 1930, 42-43.
- ⁴⁹ *Annual* 1932, 28; *Southern Catalogue*, 28.
- ⁵⁰ *Southern Catalogue*, 24-25.
- ⁵¹ *Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Southern Union College*, August 14, 1963, typescript in the files of Trustee J. Earl Danieleley, Elon College.
- ⁵² *Annual* 1926, 47-48.
- ⁵³ *Annual* 1928, 47-49.
- ⁵⁴ *Annual* 1895, 15; *Annual* 1919, 30; *Annual* 1923, 5, 46.
- ⁵⁵ *Annual* 1901, 10.
- ⁵⁶ *Annual* 1917, 11; *Annual* 1919, 13-14.

Chapter XIV

The Congregational-Christian Merger

The Christian Church has always kept the door open for a possible union with other religious bodies which would accept the cardinal principles to which the Christians had clung tenaciously for decades and which they consistently refused to abandon or materially to abridge. An ecumenical spirit had been shown through frequent invitations to members of other religious denominations to attend their conferences and Convention sessions as honored guests. Ministers of Evangelical churches were welcomed to their pulpits, and their communion services were open to all who professed Jesus Christ as their Savior. The fraternal union of northern and southern Christians, disrupted in the 1850's because of the slavery issue, was renewed in 1890, and the path was smoothed for the establishment of a single Christian denomination in 1922.

In October 1874 a group of "the lovers of Christian union" met in Cincinnati, Ohio, and organized the "Union Christian Churches of America." Thomas J. Melish was elected president and W. B. Wellons, secretary. Both of these officials were delegated to serve with W. C. McCune as editors of *Unity*, a publication which they planned to be the official organ of the movement.

The second Convention of the organization was held May 5-8, 1875, in the Christian Church at Suffolk, Virginia. Official delegates in attendance were W. C. McCune, W. B. Wellons, J. N. Manning, T. J. Melish, J. T. Whitley, C. J. Rolston, R. H. Holland, E. W. Beale, J. P. Barrett, S. N. Whitson, M. B. Barrett, and A. G. Anderson. Also present as "deliberative members" were C. A. Apple, D. A. Long, James Williamson, and J. T. Kitchen. The program consisted of lengthy and detailed discourses on religious beliefs and principles,

unintelligible to the average laymen but evidently thought-provoking to the participants in the session. A general agreement was reached to study the matter further and to continue striving for both denominational and interdenominational Christian union. The following officers were then elected to serve until the next Convention: Thomas J. Melish, president; J. T. Whitley, secretary; W. B. Wellons, corresponding secretary; and J. W. Barber, treasurer.¹

No record has been found of further activities of this movement. Wellons, who was one of its leading promoters, died in 1877. Shortly after that date Whitley failed to convince the Southern Convention that its *Principles and Government* should be altered, and both he and C. A. Apple left the Church. Several others who had been delegates to the Suffolk meeting also died within a few years. With its leadership thus depleted and funds for operations difficult or impossible to raise, the organization ceased to exist. However, the fact that it had been formed is evidence of the interest among the southern Christians in expanding their Church by union with other groups; and in 1878 articles in the *Christian Sun* emphatically advocated a merger between the Christians and the Methodist Protestants, but this union was never consummated.²

No further decisive step toward union was taken by the southern Christians until 1922. In that year both the Eastern Virginia and the North Carolina Conferences requested the Southern Convention to create a Commission on Christian Union. The Convention's Executive Committee immediately appointed L. E. Smith, W. A. Harper, C. H. Rowland, W. W. Staley, J. O. Atkinson, A. R. Flowers, and D. R. Fonville to serve in that capacity. Smith was elected chairman and Harper, secretary. On February 12, 1923, a meeting was held in Raleigh, North Carolina, attended by the Commission and a similar group delegated by the Free Will Baptist Convention. An agreement was reached for a possible union upon a plan which contained little more than acceptance of the Christian's five basic principles and the statement that "A united Protestantism is the goal of our Churches." There was no specific merger as a result of the deliberations, but the willingness of the Christians to negotiate was manifested in the Commission's recommendation to the Convention at its Extraordinary Session in 1923 at Henderson, North Carolina:

That the Convention elect a Commission on Christian Union, to continue to cultivate closer relations and cooperation with all denominations, and with the Free Will Baptists in particular, and that the members of the Commission be our fraternal delegates to visit other Christian bodies.³

No permanent Commission on Union was created at the time, and the attention of the southern Christians was soon diverted from possible local unions to a national denominational merger.

After the 1922 meeting at Burlington, the General Convention of the Christian Church began negotiations with the National Council of Congregational Churches for the purpose of uniting. The gravity of such a move necessitated many joint meetings and lengthy deliberations on the part of Church officials. Several years passed while these were taking place, but in 1929 a Plan of Union was agreed upon and presented to both denominations for their study. Composed of twenty-five articles primarily devoted to specifications for the establishment of a central representative government, the Plan also contained the following paragraph:

That the basis of this new relation shall be the recognition by each group that the other is constituted of the followers of Jesus Christ. Each individual church and each group of churches shall be free to retain and develop its own form of expression. Finding in the Bible the supreme rule of faith and life, but recognizing that there is wide room for difference of interpretation among equally good Christians, this union shall be conditioned upon the acceptance of Christianity as primarily a way of life, and not upon uniformity of theological opinion or any uniform practices of ordinances.⁴

With the inclusion of this provision in the proposal, the preservation of the cardinal Principles sacred to the Christians was assured, for the only changes necessitated by the merger would be those of name and administration. At the same time, national denominational mergers are never executed without serious thought, and the Christians studied the proposition thoroughly before making their decision.

On June 3, 1929, the National Council of Congregational Churches met at Detroit, Michigan, and approved the Plan. In October of the same year the General Convention of the Christian Church convened at Piqua, Ohio, to deliberate the matter. It was generally realized that the Ohio meeting was one of the most important ever held by the Christian Church, and the large number of delegates in attendance were selected with care from a cross section of the Church membership. The following males were named to represent the Southern Christian Convention: I. W. Johnson, J. L. Johnson, W. C. Wicker, A. W. Andes, B. J. Earp, E. M. Carter, H. W. Elder, Stanley C. Harrell, William M. Jay, J. W. Knight, P. H. Fleming, W. D. Harward, N. C. Newman, C. H. Rowland, T. E. White, C. C. Ryan, G. O. Lankford, H. C. Caviness, R. L. Williamson, B. J. Howard, M. T. Sorrell, J. J. Dollar, G. D. Hunt, T. J. Green, E. C. Brady, J. M. Allred, J. S. Carden, P. T. Knapp, Joseph E.

McCauley, C. E. Newman, G. R. Underwood, J. U. Newman, J. W. Patton, R. A. Whitten, D. A. Long, J. F. Morgan, W. B. Fuller, J. L. Foster, H. S. Hardcastle, O. D. Poythress, F. C. Lester, G. C. Crutchfield, T. Fred Wright, H. M. Gray, M. W. Sutcliffe, W. H. Garman, J. C. Cummins, J. A. Kimball, K. B. Johnson, J. C. Simpson, F. F. Myrick, C. D. Johnston, W. E. Walker, Joseph W. Fix, W. C. Hook, J. M. Roberts, M. F. Allen, E. E. Holland, J. E. West, J. A. Williams, L. R. Jones, B. D. Jones, W. V. Leathers, M. J. W. White, J. E. Rawles, W. S. Beamon, T. A. Jones, W. H. Smith, T. J. Holland, and J. H. Abell. The female representatives consisted of Mesdames Elizabeth Bryant, A. M. Johnson, L. L. Vaughan, W. A. Harper, Stanley C. Harrell, C. H. Rowland, J. H. Harden, W. V. Leathers, M. J. W. White, R. T. Bradford, and Misses Pattie L. Coghill, Ruth Johnson, and Gertrude Brown. All of these delegates were not present at Piqua, but a substantial number of them were there. In addition, L. E. Smith, W. A. Harper, W. W. Staley, Warren H. Denison, S. L. Beougher, J. O. Atkinson, and H. Shelton Smith attended in an *ex officio* capacity, and the Southern Convention was adequately represented on the momentous occasion.⁵

Each Article of the Plan was discussed and voted upon separately, with each approved by unanimous consent. The Convention was then addressed by Raymond Clark, pastor of the host church, who said:

We have come at last to one of those far-off divine events. It is this for which we have so long prayed and looked forward to....

"There has been no apparent selfishness on the part of either Church group to want to drag into our merger plans that are not vital to human life, and if such does come in it, it is merely because our human minds have not been able to see the uselessness of it.

"The full plans submitted by our commission and recommended to us here today by our groups on Christian unity offer opportunities for universal loyalty to all people. We do not know the full details of what is to occur and the merger does not clear everything for the future, but it will, no doubt, set us off in the right direction. The plan, thank God, leaves room for adventure and heroic endeavor."⁶

At the conclusion of Clark's address a roll call vote was taken on the Plan as a whole; and "between 4:30 and 4:40 P.M.," on that Friday afternoon, October 25, 1929, the Plan was unanimously adopted "with hearty acclaim and approval." J. O. Atkinson, who witnessed the event, penned the following account in the *Christian Sun*:

...Neither the writer, nor any other member of that body, we fancy, can describe the feeling that pervaded the great audience and the holy afflatus that seemed to fill the house and embrace

the entire assembly in heavenly fellowship. The moment beggars description, for it was a time and an event such as one only sees and feels once in a lifetime. Somehow, one was carried beyond the power of earthly thinking and expression, because a great and far-reaching event, even in the history of Christianity, had occurred. In speaking of the same afterwards, Dr. F. G. Coffin, who was presiding, very appropriately observed that we have either killed a Church or made history in opening the way to a greater Church.⁷

Atkinson also observed:

...Our opportunities for service and for activity have been enlarged, and the enlargement of opportunities entails necessarily an increase of obligations. Congregationalists and Christians, in brief, have decided to unite their institutional, national and world-wide efforts under the leadership of our Lord only, in the endeavor to make this a better world and thus present a solid front and a united effort in kingdom activity and enlargement.

But we have done more than this. We have shown to a divided Protestantism that there is a possibility of union of forces for the larger task of the kingdom.⁸

The editor undoubtedly voiced the sentiments of the majority of the Christians in the latter statement.

Although jubilantly adopted by both Churches, the Plan merely paved the way for the organization of a united Church. A convention was then planned for that purpose, to be held at Seattle, Washington, in June 1931, and to be attended by delegations of both Congregationalists and Christians. This meeting was to be the vital step toward complete union, for unless a constitution, a name, and other details were mutually agreed upon, the merger could not be consummated. In anticipation of final ratification of union, the official organs of the Congregationalists and the Christians were merged on March 6, 1930, to form *The Congregationalist and Herald of Gospel Liberty*.⁹ Other indications were favorable also, but the final victory would not be won until the decisive vote was polled at Seattle.

Again delegates were selected with care, and the Southern Christian Convention appointed the following ministers: A. W. Andes, J. O. Atkinson, H. C. Caviness, B. J. Earp, J. W. Fix, P. H. Fleming, H. S. Hardcastle, Stanley C. Harrell, W. C. Hook, J. D. Dollar, I. W. Johnson, J. Lee Johnson, G. O. Lankford, F. C. Lester, J. E. McCauley, J. F. Morgan, N. G. Newman, C. E. Newman, J. W. Patton, O. D. Poythress, C. H. Rowland, C. C. Ryan, W. C. Wicker, R. L. Williamson, and G. D. Hunt. The laymen were E. E. Holland, J. E. West, J. A. Williams, W. V. Leathers, M. J. W. White, J. E. Rawles, J. A. Kimball, K. B. Johnson, F. F. Myrick, C. D. Johnston, T. J. Holland, J. H. Abell, E. L. Moffitt, J. M. Darden; Mesdames M. J. W.

White, John A. Williams, R. T. Bradford, W. V. Leathers, M. L. Bryant, J. H. Harden, C. H. Rowland, W. A. Harper, S. C. Harrell; and Misses Graham Rowland and Jewel Truitt. The *ex officio* members were W. A. Harper, W. W. Staley, L. E. Smith, W. H. Denison, G. O. Lankford, and S. L. Beougher.¹⁰ A large number of these representatives were able to attend the Seattle meeting where the entire Christian Church delegation numbered seventy-two, with enough visiting Church members "on the ground to make the full number a round hundred."¹¹

Many problems still existed when the Convention assembled, but these did not prove to be insurmountable and were satisfactorily settled during a period of frenzied activity in the opening hours of the session.¹² The provocative question of a name for the new denomination caused the most prolonged argument. A compromise was necessary, as the Congregationalists insisted upon being designated in the new name and the Christians were reluctant to change their ancient principle that Christian was a sufficient name for the Church. "The Congregational-Christian Churches" was finally agreed upon for the new organization, and in approving this name the Christians deviated from one of the principles for the first time. However, they considered that the potentialities for Christian service made possible by the merger justified their action. Each Church delegation then met separately and unanimously approved the new constitution, which established The General Council of Congregational and Christian Churches, Unincorporated. On Saturday, June 27, 1931, the delegations met at noon in the Plymouth Church in joint session and again unanimously approved the Constitution, and the merger was complete. William E. Gilroy described the scene in *The Congregationalist and Herald of Gospel Liberty*:

"There was no staging of anything spectacular, no outward evidence of the momentous thing that was happening in creating the largest union of churches in history, but the great audience spontaneously burst into the singing of *Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love*; and that was the most fitting symbol and expression of thankfulness and hope that could have been devised, had more studied preparation been made."¹³

With the termination of the legislation enacted at Seattle, the ecumenical vision of James O'Kelly advanced one more step toward fulfillment.

Hermon Eldredge, also writing in *The Congregationalist and Herald of Gospel Liberty*, appraised the outcome of the Convention in a prophetic statement:

All in all the great thing which has been done is not in creating a new fellowship of over a million members, but in that unani-

mously agreed-upon declaration, that "*we base our union upon the acceptance of Christianity as primarily a way of life and not on uniformity of theological opinion or any uniform practice of ordinances.*" That is something new under the sun. For sixteen hundred years the church has been trying to secure uniformity on the basis of creeds and ordinances. In these centuries force, even unto the taking of life, has been tried and found wanting. Intolerance and anathema have had their innings to force the issue...Today at least a dozen of the major denominations have the subject of Christian union in some stage of their deliberations. Christian union is in the air. It is the business of Christians to get it out of the air and live with it on the earth. It is a long, long trail a-winding to its final goal, but the start has been made, and we believe it to be a very significant start. The final goal is in the Great Commission.¹⁴

The Associated Press coverage of the meeting included interesting statistical information which Editor Atkinson copied in the *Christian Sun*:

"At the outset the united body will have the Congregational moderator and the Christian president as co-moderator. The majority of the Christian churches involved are located in the states of the Mississippi valley and the southeast. Churchmen said the merger was the largest ever to have taken place between denominations entirely distinct in origin and history. The churches affected total 6,670 in this country, with a communicant membership of 1,050,000 and a constituency, including adherents, of about 3,000,000.

"The foreign missions of the two groups already have been merged under the American board of commissioners for foreign missions. The missions are in 16 foreign countries where 850 American missionaries and more than 6,000 nationals are employed.

"Those who led the negotiations for the union, said they believe it was the beginning of a new trend in church life and will be followed by other mergers...¹⁵

The final achievement of the denominational merger at Seattle was a momentous event, not only in the story of the Christian Church but also in the religious history of the United States. Highest praise is due the numerous churchmen who labored for years to promote the union which had its culmination in the Seattle assembly, for the victory was won only because of their unsparing efforts. However, the task was not completed because many organizational details remained to be settled after the delegates jubilantly returned to their homes. Local ratification of their legislation had to be obtained; for, actually, any conference - or even any individual church - had the privilege of remaining within the new organization or abstaining from any participation in it. Uppermost in the minds of all the Christians in the South, and many elsewhere, was the future status

of the Southern Christian Convention, and the solution of this problem was the next step that had to be contemplated.

In optimistic anticipation of the final approval of the Church merger, the Southern Convention had begun preparations for its role in the new organization immediately after the meeting at Piqua, Ohio. A joint Committee was created, composed of W. Knighton Bloom, J. Edward Kirbye, Edwin C. Gillette, C. Rexford Raymond, and George N. Edwards, all members of the Congregational Advisory Board of the Southeast, which had charge of Congregational affairs in the South. The Christian Church committeemen were L. E. Smith, W. A. Harper, W. W. Staley, J. O. Atkinson, E. E. Holland, and I. W. Johnson. At the 1930 Southern Convention in Raleigh, North Carolina, this group recommended the authorization of "The Southeast Convention of Congregational and Christian Churches, Unincorporated," which would be affiliated with the incorporated Southern Convention. The purpose of a dual organization in the same territory was to provide a central government body for Congregational churches in the South without interfering with the operation of the Southern Christian Convention. The move was explained in the report of the Committee:

That the purpose of this new relation shall be to perform, on behalf of the united groups, the various functions dealing with a common service, and calling for unification of action, it being understood that where technical and legal questions may be involved, the action of the separate bodies shall be secured.....

That there be only one regional Church paper functioning for the United groups. It is, therefore, proposed that the *Southern Congregationalist* be discontinued, and that a plan be worked out whereby special Congregational interests be promoted through the use of at least two pages in *The Christian Sun* once a month. The matter of name, policy and other details are to be left to a joint committee, consisting of the editorial boards of both papers.

That a joint committee of twenty-four, of which twelve members shall be chosen by the Southern Christian Convention and the same number by the Congregational Advisory Board of the Southeast, be appointed as an executive committee of the Southeast Convention of Congregational and Christian Churches, Unincorporated.¹⁶

In keeping with the passage of this legislation, the 1932 assembly which convened at Burlington, North Carolina, was designated as the "Thirtieth Regular Session of the Southern Christian Convention, Incorporated, and the First Session of the Southeast Convention of the Congregational-Christian Churches." The officials elected to direct the affairs of the latter organization were L. E. Smith, President; C. Rexford Raymond, Vice President; with I. W. Johnson and G. N. Edwards, Secretaries. The attempt to organize the Southeast

Convention effectively was reported from the Committee of Twenty-Four through its Committee of Seven. The Congregational Advisory Board of the Southeast recommended that a Committee of Ten be appointed to work out details for the Southeast body; and W. Knighton Bloom, C. Rexford Raymond, J. Edward Kirby, Milo J. Sweet, C. A. Lincoln, L. E. Smith, W. W. Staley, F. C. Lester, J. O. Atkinson; and I. W. Johnson were appointed to this group. Before the session ended, this Committee recommended a study be continued to outline properly the functions of the Southeast Convention.¹⁷

The multiplicity of committees, designated primarily by their numerical membership, would have appeared ludicrous had not the difficulties of creating a new organizational structure in a situation without precedent been such a serious matter. The consensus of all recommendations was that further study be made during the biennium to make the operation smoother, and this was agreeable to both organizations. The older organization had led the way by voting to have its name changed to "The Southern Convention of Congregational and Christian Churches, Incorporated."¹⁸ The change was legalized when the North Carolina Legislature met in 1933. Under its new name the Convention then diligently conducted its mundane affairs while the organizational details necessitated by the merger were being studied. The outstanding accomplishment of the Burlington meeting was the fact that representatives from the former Churches met together to plan their future operation as one body, and they worked harmoniously to solve their knotty problems. It is an interesting coincidence that the First Christian Church in Burlington, North Carolina, was the scene of two momentous meetings, one in 1922, the other a decade later, and the theme of both was national denominational unity.

Some of the church leaders who were present at the session were optimistic in their appraisal of the deliberations. "The Committee on Union had many meetings and every meeting was inspiring in the spirit of fellowship and good will," commented I. W. Johnson; and Mrs. C. H. Rowland called the session "a great Convention." W. Edward Kirby stated, "Conference boundaries, or preferments, sink into insignificance when Christian men and women seek to conserve all values and reach out toward the larger life." J. F. Morgan described the meeting as follows:

Of course, the old family fellowship that has existed for so many years in the Southern Christian Convention, was largely replaced with our new interest in the incoming bride, Miss Congregationalist, but her coming brought a sweetening flavor to the process of change, and the work of the larger fellowship will result in greater blessing, and in larger usefulness in the

interest of the Kingdom of our Lord, if each of us will remain true to the other, and both remain true to our Master.¹⁹

In a prophetic vein, W. Knighton Bloom commented:

Perhaps it is a good thing for our united church that the times bristle with difficulties that should be seized upon as opportunities. Standing in the critical stage between the old and the new in religious belief and practice, we on our quest, can wield such powers as no generation of the past ever possessed. The situation is one that calls for heroic effort to make good our possibilities, by achieving a basis of unity and laying a great foundation for the future guidance and helpfulness of a tragically divided Christian world. It is for us to a greater degree than before, to lead the way.²⁰

In this spirit of confidence in the guidance of Divine Providence and mutual cooperation, the Congregational Christians began the task of readjusting their affairs to suit the requirements of their new Church and enlarged opportunities.

The main problem recognized at the Burlington meeting was that of converging Christian and Congregational organizations in the South into one central governing body. The Congregational Churches belonged to a Conference that was not a part of the Southern Christian Convention but was under the supervision of the Congregational Advisory Board of the Southeast. A further complication was the fact that the Southern Christian Convention owned property and the Congregational Advisory Board owned none. Authority had to be determined so that one organization could receive and disburse funds for the support of institutions sponsored by the Southern Convention, as well as those functioning within the Congregational organizations. It was therefore necessary that the administrative power be delegated to one central body, and the decision had to be made as to which this would be. There were other lesser problems, and a satisfactory solution had to be found for all.

Considerable progress was made during the biennium which ended at the 1934 session of the Southern Convention and the Southeast Convention of Congregational Christian Churches held in Suffolk, Virginia. Each organization met separately, but the latter did little more than endorse the actions of the Southern Convention and adopt a constitution which stated:

The purpose of this new relation shall be to perform on behalf of the united groups the various functions dealing with common service and calling for unification of action. It shall be promotional, inspirational, educational, and policy-determining. It shall not be administrative, but rather shall seek to promote the spirit of Fellowship among our various churches and conferences of the Southeast.²¹

In its session the Southern Convention admitted the Conference of the Congregational Churches of the Carolinas into membership and amended its Principles and Government to provide membership, if requested, for "any Conference or Association of the Congregational Churches within the states of Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, or elsewhere." A petition from the Georgia and Alabama Christian Conference and the Alabama Christian Conference was honored so that they might withdraw from the Convention "to unite with their respective State Conferences of Congregational Christian Churches." All other problems were included in a recommendation of the Executive Board which stated:

Since our ultimate goal is satisfactory co-ordination of the missionary, church-building, educational and ministerial relief or superannuation work of the Southern Convention and National Boards, we recommend that a meeting of those representing these interests be held during the meeting of the General Council at Oberlin, Ohio, June 21-27, 1934.²²

As further evidence of its willingness to cooperate with the new Church organization, the following resolution introduced by William Tate Scott was adopted by the Convention at its 1934 session:

In order to facilitate the functioning of the Southern Convention of Congregational and Christian Churches, Incorporated, along all lines, as early as possible; be it resolved,

That the Executive Board be empowered and instructed to put into operation any and all plans, including any adjustments which may be mutually agreed upon by the Special Committee meeting at Oberlin, Ohio, as authorized by the Convention.²³

With the passage of this legislation, the Church in the South awaited assistance from a higher level of denominational authority in solving its remaining problems.

When the General Council convened at Oberlin, the Southern Convention was recognized as "a constituent element of the Council and on the basis of a State Conference." Its delegates were seated and Stanley C. Harrell, one of their number, was elected Vice Moderator of the Council. Before the meeting was concluded, all members of the former Christian Church who were present met together under the leadership of Frank G. Coffin and Warren H. Denison. Their decision was that by January 1, 1935, all functions "which seemed to separate or show any distinction between Christians and Congregationalists" should cease. This decision had the following happy result:

When the action of the Christian group was reported to the General Council, the man who offered the motion was not allowed to finish, nor was any speech permitted to be made,

but amid universal acclaim and applause the resolution was most happily and heartily adopted by the Council unanimously.²⁴

This legislation authorized the Southern Convention of the Congregational Christian Church to exercise administrative control over its property and projects very much as it had previously done, and all former Congregational churches in the South were encouraged to affiliate with the Convention. The Southeast Convention, having no administrative function, remained in existence until 1939 as a cultural religious fellowship. Its meetings, held in alternate years, featured addresses from Daniel A. Poling, editor of the *Christian Herald*; Vaughan Dabney, dean of Andover-Newton Theological Seminary; and Josephus Daniels, then United States Ambassador to Mexico. S. Parks Cadman was a featured speaker on the Convention programs and H. Shelton Smith, Lucy M. Eldredge, Edwin C. Gillette, W. R. Kedzie, Roy C. Helfenstein, and many others were guest speakers at its sessions from time to time. Arranging such elaborate programs were time consuming, difficult to finance, and required a great deal of hard work. The outbreak of World War II required the churchmen to increase their efforts in other activities; and the Southeast Convention, which had served an admirable but not-essential purpose, ceased to exist. In the words of James H. Lightbourne, one of its presidents, "It atrophied",²⁵ although the programs it presented while still active remain an inspiring memory to those who heard them.

The following table covers the life of the Southeast Convention:

Year	Meeting Place	President	Secretary
1932	Burlington, N. C.	L. E. Smith	C. Rexford Raymond
1934	Suffolk, Va.	James H. Lightbourne	George N. Edwards
1935	Raleigh, N. C.	C. A. Lincoln	George N. Edwards
1937	Jacksonville, Fla.	John G. Truitt	Alfred W. Hurst
1939	Norfolk, Va.	James H. Lightbourne	Alfred W. Hurst ²⁶

With its status as a unit of the Congregational Christian organization clarified at the Oberlin meeting, the Southern Convention resumed its activities, making adjustments from time to time to conform to the new overall Church program. The keynote of this program was contained in the following legislation also enacted by the General Council at the Oberlin meeting:

"Stirred by the deep need of humanity for justice, security, and spiritual freedom and growth, aware of the urgent demand

within our churches for action to match our gospel, and clearly persuaded that the Gospel of Jesus can be the solvent of social as of all other problems, we hereby vote:

"That the General Council create the Council for Social Action of the Congregational and Christian Churches of the United States of America.

.....Believing that the Church will find itself as it loses itself in the struggle to achieve a warless, just, and brotherly world, we launch this venture, dedicating ourselves to unremitting work for a day in which all men find peace, security and abundant life."

*The Council for Social Action invites each church to organize a local committee or council for Social Action and welcomes the opportunity to cooperate with such local groups in planning for the larger effectiveness of the social program of the church.*²⁷

A few weeks prior to the 1934 meeting of the General Council the Southern Convention had changed the name of its Committee on Social Reform to the Committee on Social Relations, with "International interracial, Industrial and Political Relations" as its objectives. A decade later the name was changed to the Committee on Social Action.²⁸ Regardless of its exact name, the committee consistently based its work on the theme summarized by the General Council's statement.

In 1936 H. Shelton Smith and George N. Edwards, acting for the Committee, made a lengthy, detailed report to the Southern Convention in session at Burlington, North Carolina. Seventeen social ideals, conforming to those adopted by the Federal Council of Churches in 1932, were outlined in the report. Several of these were concerned with labor and included the advocacy of fair and living wages, improved working conditions, reduced working hours, the right of collective bargaining, abolition of child labor, and insurance against illness, old age, and unemployment. Endorsement of economic justice for the farmer and the extension of cultural opportunities "now enjoyed by urban populations to the farm family" were proposed. Other ideals described were court and penal reform; pre-marital education for "home-making and parenthood"; protection of society against traffic in intoxicants and drugs; and justice, equal rights and good will "among racial, economic and religious groups." War was repudiated, while "international agencies for the peaceful settlement of all controversies" were recommended. The concluding proposal was "the encouragement of free communication of mind with mind as essential to the discovery of truth."²⁹

After outlining the ideals, the Committee requested special emphasis for the ensuing biennium on Peace Action, Race Rela-

tions, Civil Liberties, the Liquor Problem, and Economic Relations. One reason given for this concentration of attention was that a European War which would involve the United States seemed imminent. "If the churches really believe in peace, let them say so by united peace action that is convincing," was the antidote suggested by the Committee. It was also time for the churches to attempt the removal of the "underlying factors of racial disturbance." Examples of the economic and political encroachment upon civil liberties were cited, and the churches were urged to resist this trend. Temperance should be emphasized strongly in regard to intoxicating liquors as "the ultimate source of abolition is moral, not political." Finally, the church should vigorously seek remedies for unemployment, tenant farming and sharecropping, which the government had not completely eliminated, lest "in its wake churches become puny, sick with the ravages of economic hook-worm."³⁰

Seldom at any session of the Southern Convention had a more forthright and challenging committee report been delivered, and a more inclusive outline for the social actions program of a Church is difficult to imagine. Not only did it explicitly depict the problems of the day, but it proved prophetic in many respects as some of the perplexities of 1936 became the major national problems of the future. The Convention received the report with more acclaim than action, and it was controversial to many; but the Committee which submitted it predicated its actions thereafter on the recommendations of the report and strove with all of its ability to encourage the Church to implement the provisions it contained.

Numerous committees of the Congregational Christian Churches, as was the case with similar groups in other Evangelical churches, had no coercive power or authority to enforce the ideals and principles they sought to promote. Therefore, their operations were confined to education, advice and recommendations which hopefully would produce results through conviction. The Committee on Social Relations was no exception, but it did not fail to present its aims at each session of the Southern Convention. A wide circulation and perusal of *Social Action*, a periodical published by the Church, was urged. Attendance at the Institute of International Relations, held at Duke University in 1938 and the following year at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, was promoted. The Committee favored requesting the United States government to cease placing units of the Reserve Officers Training Corps in high schools and to give the same recognition to the conscientious objectors to military service in the Congregational Christian Church as that extended to those in the "Pacifist Churches." The appointment of Myron C. Taylor as the President's representative to the Vatican

was strongly opposed, not because of "any animosity which exists between the Protestant and Catholic churches" but on the American constitutional principle of "complete separation of church and state."³¹

In 1944 all churches of the denomination were urged to sponsor the signing of the Congregational Christian Compact for World Order and, shortly afterward, to organize a War Victims and Reconstruction Committee to work with the Southern Convention's committee of the same name. Recommendation was also made that future control of the atomic bomb be delegated to a civilian rather than a military agency.³² The proposals made by the Committee, which were national and even international in scope, were not drafted to defy the secular authority, but designed for the reasons which Chairman D. J. Bowden expressed to the Southern Convention in 1942:

...regardless of our personal attitudes toward the military policy of our government, we pledge ourselves to a thorough study of the causes of war in general, and of the present conflict in particular, and of the possibilities for establishing a just and lasting peace. It is this type of peace for which the boys in our own churches will fight and die, and those who remain at home must study and work that they shall not die in vain.³³

These proposals were adopted by the Southern Convention with little opposition and corresponded with the policy adopted by the denomination as a whole. Hopefully, the stand taken by the Church would exert some influence on national thought through publicity and would produce more concrete results from the voting of its membership and others in political elections; and the Convention was, in general, pleased with the prospect. However, the subject of racial relations presented a far more complicated and difficult problem to be solved. The whites and blacks had lived as master and slave for generations; and, although religious practices among the bondsmen had been encouraged, the Christian Church in the South had condoned slavery and defiantly condemned the efforts to abolish it. During the century which followed the Civil War, assistance was given the blacks in organizing churches, conferences and schools; but the races were segregated, and unquestionably the blacks were the underprivileged. Overcoming the customs and prejudices which had been prevalent for so many years was such an enormous problem that a special effort was deemed advisable to attempt it. Consequently, in 1942 the Southern Convention was requested to appoint a Committee on Race Relations "to promote mutual goodwill and cooperation between the white and negro churches of our fellowship in North Carolina and Virginia."³⁴ The request was approved,

and in 1944 the Southern Convention appointed Aubrey C. Todd chairman, and Mrs. W. B. Williams, Miss Thelma Morris, R. L. Jackson, and C. C. Thomas, members, of a Committee on Race Relations.³⁵

In 1946 this Committee reported that Race Relations Sunday had been generally observed in the churches and that there had been an increased use of the literature provided by the Department of Race Relations of the Federal Council and that of "our own Department of Social Action." A highly successful Interracial Ministers' Retreat had been held at Franklinton Institute, which had not been marred by a single untoward incident, and the exchange of fraternal delegates between the black conferences and the Southern Convention was being encouraged. The report also praised the Congregational Christian ministers for their participation in community-planning boards, clinics, ministeriums, and similar activities "that have encouraged interracial participation," and laymen were requested to engage in such projects more frequently. The report also stated, "We are far behind the other denominations of this region in this respect," and it reminded the Church "that we have a responsibility and opportunity ourselves which we cannot afford to shirk."³⁶

After this report was submitted to the Convention, the special Committee disbanded and the Committee on Social Action, as it was known after 1944, continued to promote interracial harmony. Their work was aided by the full cooperation of the *Christian Sun*, in which statements like the following frequently appeared:

It is presumptuous to imagine we shall forever occupy positions of dominance. Let's be forbearing! Social institutions and machinery will not be able to carry the load in an orderly fashion unless the churches have developed sentiment of a dispassionate understanding in the total human family.³⁷

The Committee made uphill progress but never shirked its duties. In 1954 it announced, "The most pressing social problem of the moment in this area is that of race relations." The following recommendation was then introduced to the Southern Convention and was approved:

That the Convention by resolution make known to the Governors of North Carolina and Virginia its conviction that, in the event the Supreme Court rules that segregation in the public schools is unconstitutional, the ruling should be received in good faith and the system of public schools maintained on a non-segregated basis.³⁸

Some repercussions followed this decision, as the idea of racial integration in the schools was not readily assimilated. A formal fraternal relation was one thing, but racial integration enforced by the politi-

cal government was quite another matter. In numerous cases the pastoral leadership in churches was resented and opposed. For this reason the Committee informed the Convention in 1956:

It has come to our attention that some of the ministers of our churches have encountered difficulties because of their insistence upon freedom of the pulpit in the discussion of social issues. Such freedom is basic in the principles of our faith, and it is recommended that the Convention reaffirm the right and responsibility of ministers to discuss from the pulpits matters of social concern.³⁹

With the approval of this recommendation by the Convention, the Committee made a progressive step; and though racial relations continued to be a highly controversial matter, the Church slowly but definitely made progress in social affairs.

While solutions were being sought for the perplexities of social problems, the youth in the Church were by no means ignored or neglected.

At the 1932 joint session of the Southern Convention and the Southeast Convention of Congregational Christian Churches in Burlington, North Carolina, a request was received from Herman Truitt, Lucille Mulholland, Lizzie Bell Newman, and Clarice Gunn, officers of the Youth Fellowship. It stated that the Convention in 1930 had invited one hundred young people of the Church to a banquet in Raleigh, North Carolina, "and challenged them to organize as a Department of Young People." Immediate action followed, which promoted this statement:

Two years ago only the Eastern Virginia young people were organized. Now there is an organized group at work in Virginia Valley Central, North Carolina and Virginia, Western North Carolina, Eastern North Carolina, Georgia and Alabama Conferences.

It is the wish of the young people throughout the Southeast to share in the work of the church. We are, therefore, asking for admission into the Southeast Convention of Congregational and Christian Churches as the Department of Young People with the name of "Youth Fellowship."⁴⁰

This petition was readily granted, and the Youth Fellowship began holding its conventions in conjunction with those of the Southeast organization.

Meanwhile, plans had matured in the General Council to establish one youth movement, named the Pilgrim Fellowship, to serve the entire denomination as "a clearing-house for our young people's societies." Miss Lucy M. Eldredge, Secretary of Young People's Work for the Congregational Christian Churches, who was a guest speaker at the 1935 Southeast Convention, was especially

interested in the development of the Fellowship. In her address to this group she asserted that the new organization was replying in a comprehensive manner to the question, "What does Christian youth stand for?" In addition, Miss Eldredge stated, "The youth of today are saying, 'Give us a more adequate interpretation of the Christian religion, and we will truly share in the building of a truly Christian world.'" The new Fellowship was designed to comply with this request.⁴¹

Pilgrim Fellowships were soon organized in the five conferences of the Southern Convention and in many local churches. Conventions were held in which representatives from all the areas met and pooled their ideas. These activities obtained the full cooperation of the editors of the *Christian Sun* and, beginning in 1932, a new department entitled "Youth At Work In The Church" appeared regularly in the periodical. The progress of the youth movement also inspired the following editorial comment in 1938:

The fact is that they are getting a rather definite idea among the leaders as to what is being done in the various states represented and they are working together in, at least, something. It is refreshing to see them tackle heavy jobs, wrestle with big ideas and fight through to an honest conclusion on which is the Christian thing to do.

.....

These young people of ours are not going to be content to live at "a poor, dying rate" but want to see the world have a chance at happiness. "The Christian Sun" joins with them in this high hope and bids them godspeed as they labor to make their dreams come true.⁴²

The value of coordinating the youth work by way of the Pilgrim Fellowship was not immediately grasped by the Southern Convention, which had no Convention Youth organization of its own. As a result many churches and conferences simply added one more organization while retaining the numerous ones already in operation, and the youth program became confused and inefficient. When this fact was realized, a special Convention Committee on Young People's Work was delegated to make a survey of the situation. In 1940 the Committee reported to the Convention that its investigation revealed Pilgrim Fellowships in the five conferences and in many local churches. In addition, there were many Christian Endeavor Societies, Young People's Missionary Societies, and various other organizations, with a considerable duplication of programs and memberships. The local groups belonged to various area organizations, none of which had similar boundaries. In addition, the Committee reported:

They are also a part of the National Pilgrim Fellowship Council as it exists in the Southeast area but there is no Southern Convention Organization of Young People.

Neither are the young people of our Convention very much concerned about the program of our church in the total perspective but only in special phases such as Missions or Christian Endeavor.⁴³

The Committee also explained that the Pilgrim Fellowship, with its emphasis on personal religion, social action, and missionary activities, was not formed "to supplant any other youth group or agency," but to simplify and unite the denomination's youth program. In view of this situation, the Committee proposed that the Convention establish a Pilgrim Fellowship Council. It recommended that the membership of the Council include two young people from each of the five Conference Fellowships, two adults from the Board of Christian Education, and two adults from the Woman's Mission Board. The potential of the new agency was described in this statement:

This council could study young people's work in the Convention, correlating young people's activities and organizations. It would help the young people of the Convention to feel and know that they are part of the whole church and its program. This council also would be a link between the Southeast Pilgrim Fellowship and the five Conference Pilgrim Fellowships of our Convention. At the same time it would be an authorized body of the Convention.⁴⁴

The report was approved by the Convention, and the new agency first met at Elon College in June 1940 to plan its organizational structure and to elect its officers. During the next two years Program Guides were issued for youth groups in local churches; gifts for China Relief were sponsored; questionnaires were sent to local churches for guidance in future activities; and two representatives were elected to National Pilgrim Fellowship Work Camps. The Council decided that more administrative assistance was necessary in order to expand the program, and in 1942 the Southern Convention was requested to consider the appointment of a full time young people's worker.⁴⁵ This request was not granted at the time, and the Council was virtually inactive for the next four years.

In May 1946 the Council was reorganized in a meeting at Waverly, Virginia. The new officers were: C. Baxter Twiddy, president; Catherine (Cooper) Andes, vice president; Alice Lee (Davis) Johnson, secretary; and Isabelle Sheetz, treasurer. Additional officials were Evelyn Moore, Interdenominational Chairman; William T. Scott, Jr., Personal Action Chairman; Bland Leebrick [Leebrick], Social Action Chairman; Floyd Savage, Missionary Action Chairman;

and W. J. Andes, H. S. Hardcastle, and Mrs. F. C. Lester, advisers. Plans were made to form visitation "Teams" to aid youth groups, to raise \$6,000 to finance various projects, and to publish a newsletter. In 1948 the Convention was informed that the "Teams" had been quite active, and a large portion of the financial goal had been raised. The Council also reported that its work "was greatly strengthened with the new office of field director now being ably filled by Miss Elizabeth Chicoine."⁴⁶

Assistance to the youth program was only a part of Miss Chicoine's duties as Field Secretary, for her services included the promotion of both Christian Education and women's work. She resigned in 1949 and was succeeded on October 1st of that year by Miss Pattie Lee Coghill as Educational Secretary. Under the guidance of these two administrators, the Fellowship program expanded to include organizing new youth groups in local churches, holding rallies in the conferences, conducting summer camps and programs, and sending delegates to the National Council of the Pilgrim Fellowship. The attendance of Max Vestal at a summer camp in Italy was sponsored by the Fellowship, and in 1950 he toured the Convention area "reporting on some of the achievements and needs of present-day Europe." The next year funds were raised to educate José Dabuet, a ministerial aspirant from the Philippines, at Princeton Theological Seminary.⁴⁷ Also in 1951 the Fellowship was requested to participate in a denomination-wide study of the history, polity, and organization of the Church. One enthusiastic youth, delighted with the prospect, wrote to the *Christian Sun*:

Tell your local groups, tell your Association Rallies—let us remind other P. F'ers that Pilgrim Fellowship is not just a social club, but that it is truly the church on the youth level, and that we are taking very much of a part in the overall work of this church by our part in this study.⁴⁸

Doubtless, this comment reflected the sentiments of many members of the Fellowship and attested to the success of its program.

As the plans of the Council developed, the other organizations for youth in the Church were gradually absorbed into its activities and ceased to exist as separate bodies. This consolidation into one denominational movement proved beneficial, and the importance of the Fellowship increased. "Work Day For Christ" and "Youth Day" observations were sponsored throughout the Church, in addition to the many meetings and rallies held. The acquisition of the Moonelon Conference Center in the 1950's provided facilities for an expansion of the program, and full use was made of it. Under the leadership of Warren Matthews, who became president of the Council in 1952, the work of the Fellowship continued to be a valued part of the Church's

life. He was followed in office by Phillip Mann, Faye Gordon, and Paul Robinson, respectively, each of whom served a two-year term.

On May 31, 1954, Miss Coghill resigned, having made a valuable contribution to youth work, in addition to fulfilling her other duties. On December 1 of that same year John S. Graves became Secretary of Christian Education and Young People's Work, serving efficiently in that capacity until September 1, 1956, when he resigned to accept a position on the faculty of Elon College. Robert A. Knowles then took over the duties of the office, and the organization continued to thrive.⁵⁰

Before and after the Youth Fellowship requested the services of a Field Secretary, other boards and agencies of the Church also expressed their need for more administrative assistance. In 1930 a resolution was passed by the Convention to employ a Promotional Secretary as soon as possible, but no further action was taken until 1938. At the Convention session that year a report was submitted by a special Committee on Promotional Plans. J. O. Atkinson, L. E. Smith, Vitus R. Holt, R. L. House, Joe French, Stanley C. Harrell, J. E. West, and Mrs. John G. Truitt made up the Committee. The report recommended merging the Board of Education with the Board of Christian Education and the election of a Promotional Secretary to promote "all the enterprises of the Convention" and to edit the *Christian Sun*. An Advisory Committee, composed of the chairmen of the boards of the Convention, the presidents of the five member-conferences, and the president of the Convention, was to supervise the work of the new official. Upon the passage of this proposed legislation, F. C. Lester was elected to the secretarial office.⁵¹

Lester resigned the pastorate of the First Christian Church of Norfolk, Virginia, and moved to Elon College to begin his multitudinous duties. In his report to the Convention in 1940 the Secretary summarized his activities for the first nineteen months in office. He had traveled 40,000 miles, made 150 addresses, visited half of the local churches, conferred with all of the pastors save one, held hundreds of interviews with church leaders, conferred with all young ministers and assisted in obtaining eighteen new ones, assisted in starting four new churches, directed the Student Summer Service, aided with many training school programs, and edited the *Christian Sun*. Lester also made many recommendations for future correlation of activities and denominational growth.⁵² These plans were put into operation under the guidance of the Secretary and bore fruit by 1944. In that year the Convention was informed that the total enrollment of its member-churches had risen to 32,149, a gain of 6 per cent in six years. The average minister's salary for the same period had risen to \$1,530.22, a gain of 61 per cent. "The average salary is yet much too

low, but the increase is very encouraging," commented the Secretary. Also, for the same period the total contribution of churches had totaled \$443,565, which was an average of \$13.80 per member, and represented a 64 per cent increase. Of the many churches seriously handicapped by debt in 1938, only one had any serious financial difficulties in 1944. All boards and agencies of the Convention were free from debt, with balances on hand, and, "This even includes *The Christian Sun*." In concluding the report, Lester expressed his conviction that the Convention should work in the future as a unit "rather than as separate units"; more representatives of the Convention were needed to work among the churches; "and we should share to a much larger extent in our world-wide church program."⁵³

In 1940 the Secretary was relieved of the editorship of the *Christian Sun* in order that he might concentrate his efforts on the remaining duties of his office. In 1944 the Southern Convention revised its constitution and replaced the office of Promotional Secretary with that of Superintendent. The responsibilities of the office specified that:

It shall be his duty to become informed concerning every phase of the Convention and denominational work, to organize and coordinate all the work of the Convention at the discretion of the Executive Board, so that each phase of the work may be duly emphasized and that all the work may be done with efficiency and economy of time and money.⁵⁴

In addition, the Superintendent was to visit pastors and churches, edit the *Christian Annual*, represent the Convention at denominational and interdenominational meetings, and be at the service of all the boards of the Convention.

F. C. Lester was elected the first Superintendent, serving until 1946 when he resigned his office. In that year he reported to the Convention the general progress and financial stability of all the boards and institutions of the Convention. Five new churches, with a total membership of 379, had been added during the biennium. Ministerial salaries had been increased, and the contributions to benevolences and missions had risen to \$103,742, an increase of 106.5 per cent over the total for 1938. However, the Superintendent felt that organizational improvement would produce even more satisfactory results. "We have too many ways of raising too little money," he said. In his opinion, if funds were solicited only for the work of the Conference, the Convention, the National Denomination, and Foreign Missions, rather than by numerous special campaigns for individual projects, contributions would increase "and there can be a much better type of Churchmanship developed." Lester also requested the services of additional personnel to assist in keeping abreast of the expanding duties of the Superintendent's office. The

report was accepted, although the categorical system of fund raising was never fully put into practice.⁵⁵

On July 1, 1946, William Tate Scott began his duties as the second Superintendent of the Southern Convention and served until 1959. During his tenure a Convention Office was properly equipped and staffed at Elon College. From time to time Misses Melva Foster, Mabel Rachel, Ruth Dunn, Dorothy Scott (later Mrs. Donald Darnell); Mesdames Jo Williams and W. J. Andes and others were engaged in secretarial duties in the office, and in 1951 Miss Edna M. Fitch joined the staff as bookkeeper and Assistant Treasurer. In 1950 an official dwelling was erected by the Convention at Elon College for the Superintendent and his family. Following the course inaugurated by his predecessor in office, and aided by vastly more facilities, Superintendent Scott kept in close touch with every phase of the Convention's program; served as liaison man between the Convention and the national denomination; promoted new projects and assisted in improving old ones. The establishment of the Convention Office filled a need of long standing by providing a central clearing-house for handling correspondence, dispensing literature, furnishing information, arranging denominational programs, and many other services necessary for the Convention's further development.⁵⁶

Various changes in the organization and function of committees and boards of the Convention were made during the incumbency of the first two Superintendents. In 1948 a Ministerial Scholarship Fund was established to aid students preparing for the ministry or other full time service in the Congregational Christian Churches. Within a few years this move proved to be a duplication of functions, and in 1954 the Convention merged the Committee on the Ministerial Scholarship Fund with the Committee on the Ministerial Student Loan Fund, "since both funds are designed to aid the same students needing aid."⁵⁷ Regardless of this consolidation of control, however, the financial accounts of the funds were to be kept separate and apart. In 1956 Walter L. Cooper and Edna M. Fitch, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer respectively of both funds, reported the assets of the Ministerial Loan Fund as \$18,822.28, and the biennial receipts of the Ministerial Scholarship Fund at \$6,648.80.⁵⁸ These sums represented a substantial increase in assets for these purposes, and most of the funds were disbursed in student loans as fast as the money was received.

While the funds for student aid had increased over the years, they had grown slowly; for raising money for church activities had usually proved to be difficult, and the Congregational Christians were no exception. In the hope of improving their financial resources, the Southern Convention in 1940 appointed a Committee on Steward-

ship. Jesse H. Dollar served as chairman, with Elwood W. Jones, A. Lanson Granger, J. Frank Apple, J. A. Denton, and R. A. Whitten as members. Two years later the Committee reported to the Convention that both Stewardship Institutes and Pastors' Retreats had been held; "Every Member Canvasses" conducted; the "Lord's Acre" plan encouraged in rural churches; and the *Christian Sun* used to dispense information on its work. The request was also made and granted that the Committee's name be changed to The Commission on Stewardship of the Southern Convention of Congregational Christian Churches, "to agree with our denominational name for stewardship work." The re-named body then continued its promotional program.⁵⁹

During the first decade after its organization, the Commission concluded that many churches were suffering financially because of either improper planning or lack of any planning at all. A survey of the member-conferences of the Convention, conducted in 1953 and summarized below, substantiated this conclusion:

Churches having budgets	93
Churches having no budgets	62
Churches not replying to this question	34
Churches conducting Every Member Canvasses	54
Churches conducting no Every Member Canvasses	88
Churches not replying to this question	47

In consequence of the revelations of these statistics, the following year the Convention was requested to employ a Secretary of Stewardship and Evangelism to work with the individual churches in both fields.⁶⁰ It was felt that the dual role of the proposed official would not only benefit stewardship promotion but greatly expedite evangelism in the local churches as well. The Committee on Evangelism acquiesced to this arrangement as, for two decades, it had consistently used the columns of the *Christian Sun* and made numerous recommendations to the Convention urging ministers to increase their evangelistic efforts. Success had never been achieved to the full satisfaction of the Committee. Greater achievements were optimistically, though conditionally, predicted by the Commission on Stewardship:

If the pastors will back this individual up and use him in our churches, a great many of the above figures can be changed to more favorable ones, and the financial needs of our total program can and will be met, and new souls born into the Kingdom.⁶¹

The Executive Board of the Convention reacted favorably to this reminder of the Great Commission and authorized the establishment of the office. A home was constructed at Elon College for the new official, and on December 1, 1954, Fred P. Register began

his duties as Secretary of Stewardship and Evangelism of the Southern Convention.⁶² During the first sixteen months in his new assignment Register traveled 15,940 miles to hold innumerable conferences and interviews with ministers and laymen. He delivered hundreds of sermons and addresses; held workshops on visitation and other forms of evangelism; conducted clinics on financial canvassing; and represented the Convention at several denominational meetings. His report to the Convention in 1956 showed an improvement in the financial condition of many local churches and a new emphasis on evangelism was apparent. Clearly another progressive step had been taken by the Southern Convention, and the Secretary continued his work until 1958 when he resigned to become Superintendent of the Nebraska Conference.⁶³

While consolidation and merging of committees, boards, and agencies greatly benefitted administration, it did not solve all of the Southern Convention's problems; nor did the merger of the Christian and Congregational Churches do so. The Christians in the South had never been able to establish their own theological seminary and were therefore forced to approve schools located at a considerable distance from their own membership. Years before the merger of the Churches the Congregationalists had established the Atlanta Theological Seminary Foundation in Atlanta, Georgia, in order to use the educational facilities available in that city. Also, before the merger this foundation had been renamed the Southern Seminary Foundation and moved to Nashville, Tennessee, where Vanderbilt University was the approved school. In 1934 the Southern Convention requested the Foundation be moved to Duke University at Durham, North Carolina, and supported the proposal with plausible reasons. However, the change was not made, and in 1936 the Convention voted to "designate Duke University as its official center in which to develop, . . . the fullest resources for first rate equipment in the field of theological education." The central location of the University in relation to the majority of the Convention membership and the outstanding reputation of its Divinity School supported this decision, and no record has been found of any further action.⁶⁴

In addition to its Seminary proposal, the 1934 session of the Convention also took action upon the suggestion of Historian W. E. MacClenny to organize a society "for the preservation of our history, so that we may get our inspiration from the past, do our duty to the present, and place our hopes in the future." J. O. Atkinson, N. G. Newman, and H. Shelton Smith were appointed a Committee on Historical Research to make recommendations on the matter. The report of this group made to the 1936 Convention contained a list of historical material already collected and proposed that the Library

at Elon College "be designated the place for depositing this historical data, and that a room for this collection be known as the Church History Room." Individuals and conferences were urged to collect historical material and send it to the depository where, hopefully, display cases, files, and similar equipment could soon be provided. The collection was also to include historical data of the Congregational Church "prior to the union of the two bodies."⁶⁵

The action of the Convention encouraged MacClenny, but it did not establish the Church History Society that he proposed. He repeated his request at each succeeding session of the Convention until 1946 when ill health forced him to resign as Historian. He did not live to see his cherished idea become a reality, for he died in 1950.⁶⁶ The Executive Board of the Convention, on February 14, 1956, in its meeting at Elon College, authorized changing the name of the O'Kelly Memorial Foundation to The Historical Society of the Southern Convention, and voted to maintain the Church History Room and preserve historic sites. The O'Kelly Foundation had been established in 1950 for the purpose of preserving the O'Kelly Family Cemetery in Chatham County, North Carolina. Its first trustees were C. E. Newman, Stanley C. Harrell, S. H. Basnight, Kenneth D. Register, and Misses Lillie Fowler and Margaret Hall.⁶⁷ Widening the scope of the Foundation's activities by changing it to an organization for general historical purposes was an intelligent move on the part of the Convention. In 1956 the new Society was placed in charge of twelve directors elected in two classes so that their terms would be staggered. The board members named to the Class of 1958 were Mesdames R. A. Whitten and Oma U. Johnson, and J. Frank Apple, S. E. Madren, S. H. Basnight, and Kenneth D. Register. The Class of 1960 was composed of Mesdames Garland Spratley and W. W. Sellers, and Stanley C. Harrell, L. E. Smith, William T. Scott, and F. C. Lester.⁶⁸

With the establishment of the Society, the plans on which MacClenny had labored began to develop. At last there was an organization devoted to church history in which any individual member or non-member of the Congregational Christian Church could participate, and the roll of the Society increased rapidly. Extensive research was begun, and has not ceased since, to increase the size of the collection, and especially to replace or duplicate items lost in the 1923 library fire at Elon College. The gracious cooperation of the Congregational Library in Boston, Massachusetts, and of many other depositories, including Defiance College and the North Carolina Department of Archives and History, has greatly strengthened this project. The response of individuals and churches to requests for items of historical interest has been gratifying, and the collection

in the Church History Room at Elon College today is annually attracting an increasing number of visitors and scholars. The Church has every reason to be proud of this section of its organization.

MacClenny was succeeded as Historian by C. E. Newman, who served from 1946 until his death in 1952. No replacement was made until 1954 when John W. Barney was elected for a two year term; he was followed by F. C. Lester in 1956.⁶⁹ These men made interesting reports at each session of the Convention, just as the first Historian had done, and they served a worthy purpose in reminding and informing the delegates of the historical heritage of their Church.

During the 1940's, while the Historian was strenuously advocating the organization of a Historical Society, numerous other matters also claimed the attention of the Church, with the result that several new studies and programs were initiated by the Convention. One of the first of these was the result of a motion passed at the 1940 Convention for the appointment of a Committee on the Rural Church to investigate in North Carolina and Virginia "all phases of rural life which relate themselves to the rural church," and to recommend a special program for such churches. W. Millard Stevens was appointed as chairman of the Committee; and C. E. Newman, R. D. Coulter, W. J. Andes, I. W. Johnson, H. E. Crutchfield, A. L. Granger, M. A. Pollard, E. M. Carter, and S. E. Madren served as members.⁷⁰

The Committee report submitted two years later revealed that 81 per cent of the churches, containing 65 per cent of the total membership, were rural. The per capita financial contributions were about \$4.50 annually, "a little over one half of the national average for rural church members." Over half the churches had no resident minister, while many had none at all. The average equipment was "a one-room church house with one Sunday School room," and the programs of these churches were severely limited in scope. The Committee also concluded that the rural congregations were financially able to support an expanded program if sufficiently inspired to do so. Therefore, recommendations were made for temporary financial assistance, closer cooperation with governmental agencies serving rural areas, and closer contact between urban and rural congregations and ministers. Hopefully, immediate improvement in the program would take place and the rural membership would be thus encouraged to exert a greater effort on their own.⁷¹

The information contained in this report doubtless came as a surprise to many people. There were many impressive Congregational Christian church buildings in the southern states where large, affluent congregations conducted elaborate church programs. This was especially true in North Carolina and Virginia, and the plight of the rural churches was not reflected in the impressions made by

the urban organizations. The study also furnished a reason for the imbalance in membership: the churches in the cities and towns were growing, while those in the agricultural areas were declining. This problem was common to most denominations at the time, and the solution was sought by other denominations as well as the Congregational Christians.

Under the chairmanship of S. E. Madren, the Committee's recommendations in 1946 included advocacy of "The Lord's Acre Plan" wherever practical for financial aid, and ministerial use of the *Rural Affairs News Letter* issued by the North Carolina Council of Churches. The following relevant proposal was also made:

That more stress be placed upon the architecture of the rural church. There is a great need for improvement of church building and for beautifying of church grounds. This is essential to the life of the church.⁷²

In this statement the Committee shrewdly described a significant defect. With improved transportation facilities, people could easily drive into towns to worship in beautiful, comfortable, modern sanctuaries rather than attend the uncomfortable, unattractive, old fashioned buildings nearer home. The disadvantage of this growing custom was that neighborly religious fellowship in the rural community was declining. Attending the Sunday service was not enough to stabilize the denominational program, and the answer seemed to be that the church in the home community must be made attractive.

Efforts to achieve this goal continued. In 1948 Committee Chairman H. E. Crutchfield requested the Convention to urge attendance at a pastor's school at Elon College in July of that year and at rural pastor's schools held in several states at various times, to observe Rural Life Sunday, and to attempt the recruiting of ministers especially for service in rural churches.⁷³ Chairman James H. Lightbourne, Jr., reported in 1954 that the cooperation of the denomination's Division of Church Extension and Evangelism of the Board of Home Missions had been extended the Committee in conducting an institute for Rural Ministers in the Brick Rural Life School at Bricks, North Carolina. Recommendation was made that use be made of the "Parish Workbook" issued by the Town and Country Department of the Board of Home Missions; and attendance was urged at Rural Pastor's Schools in Virginia and in New Hampshire.⁷⁴

Gradual improvement became discernible, and today numerous rural churches which were once on the brink of dissolution are thriving. Others have been abandoned, however, as shifts in population rendered their use impractical. Still others, though inactive, are maintained for their historic or sentimental significance, and annual memorial services are held in a number of these churches. The effort

to save the rural churches was sufficiently successful to justify its cost, and many of those which survived are important parts of the denominational organization today.

While the Committee on the Rural Church was deploring the shortage of ministers who would serve pastorates in the country churches, the Convention acknowledged awareness of the fact that there was not a surplus of ministers in the denomination who would serve the urban churches. In an effort to find a remedy for this situation, L. E. Smith, E. Carl Brady, R. T. Grissom, I. W. Johnson (replaced by H. S. Hardcastle), and R. A. Whitten were appointed by the Convention in 1946 to serve with Chairman Stanley C. Harrell as a Committee on the Ministry. The study made by this group and reported to the Convention two years later found that many churches were supplied with ministerial students or part time ministers where full time pastors were urgently needed and could be supported. Unfortunately, candidates for ordination were not increasing sufficiently to supply the demand. The Committee had no immediate solution to propose but added this statement to its report:

Your committee believes whole-heartedly in a "God-called" ministry. The point we would emphasize is that we believe God calls through the voice of the deeply consecrated Christian home. We believe that God influences young people to dedicate their lives to Christian service through the atmosphere of churches that are aflame with a holy enthusiasm. God has always spoken through the lives of those who are his most faithful servants. Such men and women have ever been his mouth-piece.

In conclusion, we would remind you that Jesus said: "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." We take it that Jesus meant, pray ye, not because you are commanded to pray, but because you are so desperately concerned about the harvest, that you cannot refrain from praying.⁷⁵

In addition to its concern for additional clergymen, the Committee on the Ministry gradually included devoting attention to the active pastors of the Church. It was felt that (1) ministers serving churches should be encouraged to continue their study and research; (2) they should be relieved of the pressure of details which could be shared with others; and (3) they should have relief from personal financial strain. To pool ideas on these problems, Chairman Ferris E. Reynolds conducted a study conference and ministerial retreat in 1953 at Camp New Hope. The meeting was quite successful and, in addition to its inspirational challenge, the decision was made to request the formation of a "responsible committee" in each local church to seek means to relieve the pastor of unnecessary pressures and burdens. However, the problem of increasing the number of

ministers remained and was no nearer a solution than before.⁷⁶

The Committee continued its efforts, and Chairman H. S. Hardcastle reported to the Convention in 1956 that an Annual Ministers' Convocation had been held for each of the past two years; a Retreat for Ministers had been arranged at Moonelon; and the Christian Vocation or Life Work Conference conducted by another Convention committee for young people at Moonelon had been encouraging. Furthermore, the Committee recommended the ordination of women ministers to help relieve the shortage; commended the efforts to increase ministerial salaries; and urged that all ministers continue "to study and read and think."⁷⁷

The task faced by this Convention Committee was difficult, but strenuous efforts were made to combat it, and the Church reaped a greater harvest because of its services than would have been possible had it never been created.

With the women and the youth of the Church adequately organized and busily engaged in their programs, the Southern Convention decided in 1946 that the time was ripe to organize its men. A. H. McIver, Harry W. Lee, George D. Colclough, Roy A. Larrick, and Cyrus Shoffner were appointed to constitute a Committee on Men's Work.⁷⁸ On April 16, 1947, this group met with Superintendent Scott and Walter Graham, Director of the Laymen's Fellowship of the Congregational Christian Churches, at the Alamance Hotel in Burlington, North Carolina. Plans were made for the organization of Fellowships in local churches, districts, conferences and the Convention. The meeting was followed by a banquet, attended by seventy-six laymen representing the five member-conferences.⁷⁹

In October 1947 Walter Graham, W. T. Scott, and George D. Colclough, acting as a team, held rallies in all of the five conferences, and organizations were formulated in each conference. The next step was the election of the Laymen's Council, composed of I. H. Vickery, A. H. McIver, J. J. Rountree, George D. Colclough, Cyrus Shoffner, S. H. Pell, Charles E. Heath, Jr., R. D. Holland, and Harry W. Lee. Superintendent Scott met with this Council at Elon College on March 7, 1948, to plan a convention for the next month and to suggest numerous projects for the new organization.⁸⁰

On April 18, 1948, the first Convention of the Laymen's Fellowship was held at Liberty (Vance) Church, Epsom, North Carolina, while the Southern Convention was also in session at the same place. A constitution and by-laws were adopted, after which the following officers were elected: George D. Colclough, Chairman; Charles E. Heath, Jr., Vice Chairman; and I. H. Vickery, Secretary-Treasurer. A. H. McIver, Rex Powell, Cyrus Shoffner, S. H.

Pell, Harry W. Lee, R. D. Holland, R. A. Larrick, K. T. Rothgeb, J. H. Rountree, and Wayne Morton composed the Council.⁸¹

The objectives of the Fellowship were to encourage the participation of laymen in every phase of Church activity. To emphasize this program, inspirational addresses were featured at the second Convention, which met at Elon College on January 23, 1949, in conjunction with the Christian Worker's Conference. Howell Davies, Allen S. Meek, and Rockwell Harmon Potter were the guest speakers. The third Sunday in October of each year was designated as Layman's Sunday, and many churches had laymen participate in their services on those occasions. In January 1950 a special Layman's Fellowship Day was held at Elon College, where a record attendance heard addresses by Walter Graham, Thomas L. Moose, and Martin Goslin. In 1952 Vere V. Loper, Moderator of the General Council, installed the newly elected officers: W. B. Williams, Chairman; J. Earl Danieleley, Vice Chairman; and S. H. Pell, Secretary-Treasurer. I. H. Vickery, Rex Powell, S. H. Pell, Hubert Beane, G. C. Mann, L. G. Robinson, K. B. Dofflemeyer, C. A. Pugh, S. L. Mauldin, and B. B. Fort composed the Council. These officers were all re-elected for another two year term in 1954.⁸²

During the four-year incumbency of these officials, the Fellowship engaged in a variety of projects. A campaign was sponsored to raise \$25,000 for Moonelon, and the cornerstone of the central building at the Center was laid during the 1955 Laymen's Rally. The sustaining fund for Elon College was endorsed by the organization, and a group insurance plan for ministers was proposed. Regular space for the Fellowship was requested in the *Christian Sun*, with J. Earl Danieleley delegated to edit the material published. Fathers were encouraged to bring their sons with them to the rallies, and inspirational addresses by outstanding churchmen continued to be featured at the meetings. In 1956 the officers elected were: J. Earl Danieleley, Chairman; P. D. Howell, Vice Chairman; and D. Marsh McLelland, Secretary-Treasurer. Under these officials, the Fellowship continued to promote its program and constitute a vital unit of the Church organization.⁸³

The Moonelon Center in which the Laymen's Fellowship developed an interest was a gift of property near Elon College made to the Southern Christian Convention in 1951. The donors were William W. Sellers and his wife, Hazel C. Sellers, of Burlington, North Carolina, and presented to the Executive Board of the Convention by their pastor, Henry E. Robinson. Sellers was a direct descendant of Benjamin Rainey, one of O'Kelly's early associates, and his family had been devoted to the work of the Church for many years. The gift of Moonelon was only one of many expressions of their loyalty to the denomination.

The property consisted of seventeen acres of land, valued at approximately \$35,000, containing a concrete swimming pool, a lodge, a lake, an outdoor kitchen, and a caretaker's house. Equipped with electricity, connected to a city water supply, and with ample room for the construction of additional facilities, Moonelon was an ideal site for Church conferences, rallies, retreats, and recreational activities. The gift was gratefully accepted by the Convention, and Henry E. Robinson, L. E. Smith, John G. Truitt, Stanley C. Harrell, George D. Colclough, William T. Scott, and Mrs. W. E. Wisseman were appointed to serve as a committee to control and supervise the property.⁸⁴

Use of this new facility began immediately and was greatly expanded upon the completion of the central assembly building in 1955. In the same year dormitories for men and women were completed, each with accommodations for thirty-two guests. By means of this development, John S. Graves, Secretary of Christian Education and Youth Work, was able to provide "thirteen full weeks of conferences and camps" for the youth of the Church.⁸⁵ Since that time Moonelon has continued to serve as an invaluable asset to the Church, and its proximity to Elon College has made its usefulness doubly effective.

At the same time the youth program of the Southern Convention was implemented by the acquisition of Moonelon, plans were also maturing to provide greater financial security for older people. In 1950 the Executive Board authorized a Committee on Gerontology, composed of R. L. House, W. B. O'Neill, A. H. McIver, Stanley C. Harrell, and Miss Pattie Lee Coghill. No record has been found of any action taken by this group, which may have been deemed unnecessary because of a group insurance arrangement for ministers and certified denominational employees which became effective in 1951. This plan was the result of negotiations conducted by Superintendent Scott and the Executive Board with the Home Life Insurance Company and filled a long-requested need of the Convention.⁸⁶ One year later the Board of Superannuation was dissolved, as its responsibilities were transferred to the Mission Board. Under the new arrangement ministerial relief continued to the extent of \$18,000 paid out to retired and disabled ministers, and widows of ministers, during the biennium which ended December 31, 1955.⁸⁷

During the 1940's the Southern Provincial Council was created to work with the Southeast Advisory Committee and to present recommendations for future projects. A Strategy Committee was also appointed to suggest ways and means for achieving desirable goals and enlarging the program of the Convention. Both of these organizations rendered valuable proposals during the few years of their

existence, but their continuance as a permanent part of the Convention's structure was deemed unnecessary.⁸⁸

The strenuous efforts exerted during a quarter of a century, which were rewarded by the attainment of many goals, culminated in 1956 at the Centennial Session of the Southern Convention. Appropriately held at Union Ridge Church where the Convention was founded, the occasion was marked by fitting ceremonies, including a commemorative program. The highlights in the life of the Convention were depicted in "An Epic in American Christianity," presented by the Dramatic and Music Departments of Elon College, under the direction of Professors M. E. Wooten, Jr., John Westmoreland, and C. Fletcher Moore. The historical sketch which served as a basis for the program was prepared by William Tate Scott and William Moseley Brown. Another interesting step taken at the session was the election of Martin T. Garren to the presidency of the organization. This was the second time in its century of existence that the Convention had elected a layman to this office. This action was not entirely a commemorative gesture to the fact that a layman had served as president of the Convention in 1858, but was due in part to the recommendation of the Committee on Nominations in 1954 that offices be rotated to a greater extent between the clergy and the laity. The growing importance of the Laymen's Fellowship undoubtedly exerted considerable influence on the election also.⁸⁹

Superintendent Scott presented some interesting statistics at the Centennial Session which showed there were 203 churches with a membership of 35,759 in the Convention. Incomplete reports made to the Superintendent's office listed 182 Sunday Schools that had an enrollment of 27,598, with 2,585 officers and teachers. The property value of the churches amounted to \$8,658,265, with a total indebtedness of \$467,098. During the past biennium the churches had raised \$2,815,044, of which \$463,411 had been disbursed for missions and benevolences. The average annual salary for a full-time pastor had increased to \$3,655; there were 140 ordained ministers, 23 licentiates, and 20 candidates for the ministry in the Convention, while only 16 churches had no pastor at the time. Progress had definitely been made, but there is always more for a church to do, and the Superintendent concluded his report with the statement, "We are ready to move forward and it is our earnest hope that the coming biennium will be one of deeper spiritual devotion and more consecrated labor."⁹⁰

Scott's hope was soon to be fulfilled, for at the very moment he spoke to the Convention the Congregational Christian Church stood on the brink of another merger which would enhance its scope and potential and which would be another advanced step in its history.

Footnotes

- ¹ *Annual 1875*, 62-63; *Proceedings of the Second Annual Session of the Union Christian Churches of America, Held in Suffolk, Virginia, May 5-8, 1875*, (Suffolk, Virginia: Published by the Secretary, 1875), 1-31.
- ² *Sun*, July 19, 26, 1878.
- ³ *Annual 1924*, 11.
- ⁴ *Sun*, October 31, 1929. See also Appendix C.
- ⁵ *Herald*, October 10, 1929.
- ⁶ *Sun*, October 31, 1929.
- ⁷ *Sun*, November 7, 1929.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁹ *The Congregationalist and Herald of Gospel Liberty*, March 6, 1930.
- ¹⁰ *Annual 1930*, 27-28.
- ¹¹ *Sun*, July 23, 1931.
- ¹² Wilson P. Minton, *Some Little-Known Aspects Of The Congregational Christian Church Merger*, (Philadelphia: Privately Printed, 1963), is a detailed account of the negotiations which took place outside the formal Convention sessions, including the complexity of the barriers which had to be removed before the merger could be accomplished.
- ¹³ *Sun*, July 16, 1931. For several years after the merger both "Congregational-Christian Churches" and "Congregational and Christian Churches" were used in reference to the new denomination, but gradually the latter terminology came into universal usage.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid*, July 23, 1931.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid*, July 2, 1931.
- ¹⁶ *Annual 1930*, 30-31.
- ¹⁷ *Annual 1932*, 30, 33.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid*, 23.
- ¹⁹ *Sun*, May 12, 1932.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*
- ²¹ *Annual 1934*, 50.
- ²² *Ibid*, 20-21, 32.
- ²³ *Ibid*, 47.
- ²⁴ *Sun*, July 5, 1934.
- ²⁵ Author's statement: From a personal interview with Lightbourne on January 11, 1973. D.T.S.
- ²⁶ *Annual 1932*, 3; *Annual 1934*, 49-50; *Annual 1935*, 3-10; *Annual 1937*, 3-10; *Annual 1939*, 3-6.
- ²⁷ *Year Book of the Congregational Christian Churches*, 1934, (Boston: Privately published annually by the Congregational Christian Church), 29. Hereinafter cited as *Year Book* with the identifying annual date.
- ²⁸ *Annual 1934*, 28; *Annual 1946*, 43.
- ²⁹ *Annual 1936*, 36-39.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*
- ³¹ *Annual 1940*, 33.
- ³² *Annual 1944*, 42-43; *Annual 1946*, 44-45.
- ³³ *Annual 1942*, 29.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*
- ³⁵ *Annual 1944*, 54.
- ³⁶ *Annual 1946*, 46.
- ³⁷ *Sun*, February 8, 1945.
- ³⁸ *Annual 1954*, 51.

- ³⁹ *Annual 1956*, 68.
- ⁴⁰ *Annual 1932*, 42.
- ⁴¹ *Annual 1935*, 9.
- ⁴² *Sun*, January 13, 1938.
- ⁴³ *Annual 1940*, 43.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁵ *Annual 1942*, 20-21.
- ⁴⁶ *Annual 1948*, 18-19; *Annual 1950*, 7.
- ⁴⁷ *Annual 1950*, 24; *Annual 1952*, 58.
- ⁴⁸ *Sun*, April 5, 1951.
- ⁴⁹ *Annual 1950*, 24; *Annual 1952*, 58; *Annual 1954*, 32-33; *Annual 1958*, 45.
- ⁵⁰ *Annual 1956*, 19-21, 75; *Annual 1958*, 29. During Miss Coghill's tenure detailed reports of her activities were submitted at each Convention session. Organizational changes made an individual report from the Secretary of Christian Education unnecessary after 1954.
- ⁵¹ *Annual 1930*, 51; *Annual 1938*, 18-19, 31.
- ⁵² *Annual 1940*, 27-31.
- ⁵³ *Annual 1944*, 7-9.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 34-35.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 12.
- ⁵⁶ *Annual 1948*, 14; *Annual 1950*, 11; *Annual 1956*, 11.
- ⁵⁷ *Annual 1954*, 51.
- ⁵⁸ *Annual 1956*, 58.
- ⁵⁹ *Annual 1940*, 48; *Annual 1942*, 28.
- ⁶⁰ *Annual 1954*, 30.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid*, 31.
- ⁶² *Annual 1956*, 20.
- ⁶³ *Ibid*, 64-66. See also *Annual 1958*, 29.
- ⁶⁴ *Annual 1934*, 30-31; *Annual 1936*, 32.
- ⁶⁵ *Annual 1934*, 13, 22; *Annual 1936*, 8-9.
- ⁶⁶ *Annual 1946*, 14; *Annual 1950*, 50.
- ⁶⁷ *Annual 1950*, 5.
- ⁶⁸ *Annual 1956*, 15, 61.
- ⁶⁹ *Annual 1946*, 42; *Annual 1954*, 42; *Annual 1956*, 13.
- ⁷⁰ *Annual 1940*, 31, 48.
- ⁷¹ *Annual 1942*, 26-27.
- ⁷² *Annual 1946*, 36.
- ⁷³ *Annual 1948*, 49-50.
- ⁷⁴ *Annual 1954*, 29-30.
- ⁷⁵ *Annual 1948*, 58; *Annual 1946*, 59.
- ⁷⁶ *Annual 1954*, 33.
- ⁷⁷ *Annual 1956*, 66-67.
- ⁷⁸ *Annual 1946*, 59.
- ⁷⁹ *Sun*, April 26, 1956.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁸¹ *Annual 1950*, 39-40.
- ⁸² *Sun*, April 26, 1956.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁴ *Annual 1952*, 7, 49-50. Moonelon (pronounced Moonylon) was the name given to the property by Thomas C. Moon, who developed it commercially in the early 1920's and operated it for several years as a public recreation area for swimming and boating. The use of the name continued after Sellers bought the property for the private use of his family and has been retained to the present day.
- ⁸⁵ *Sun*, April 26, 1956.
- ⁸⁶ *Annual 1952*, 6, 9; *Annual 1954*, 47-50.
- ⁸⁷ *Annual 1954*, 25; *Annual 1956*, 32.
- ⁸⁸ *Annual 1944*, 16-17; *Annual 1946*, 30.
- ⁸⁹ *Annual 1956*, 7-8, 38-39.
- ⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 22-27.

Chapter XV

The United Church of Christ

After the organization of the Congregational Christian Churches was completed, the ecumenical spirit continued to be predominant in the denomination as a whole, and this was equally true of the Southern Congregational Christian Convention, in which most of the former southern Christian Church was embodied. As a result of this attitude, in 1942 the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches authorized its Commission of Interchurch Relations and Christian Unity to confer with the Commission on Closer Relations With Other Churches of the Evangelical and Reformed Church "to explore the possibilities of union" of the two denominations. Negotiations between the two groups were immediately successful to the extent that in March 1943 a Provisional Draft of "The Basis of Union" was issued.¹

Formulating plans for a successful merger of these two denominations proved to be more difficult than framing the one upon which the Christians and Congregationalists had agreed. There are three types of church government: episcopal, presbyterian, and congregational. In the first, the supreme power is vested in the bishops; in the second, it is exercised by a representative overall synod or general assembly; and in the third, by congregational vote. The Christians and Congregationalists both used the latter type, although the power of the Southern Convention was more presbyterian than congregational and there was no organization similar to it among the northern Congregational Christians. The Evangelical and Reformed Church was governed by a presbyterian type as the dominant authority in that Church was its General Synod. Therefore, an organizational plan was necessary which would be satisfactory to the two churches whose types of government were dissimilar. In addition, the ethnic

background of the original American membership of the Congregational Christians was British, while the Evangelical and Reformed was Teutonic which accounted for differences in their practices and order of services. However, the basic principles of both denominations were sufficiently alike to encourage the effort for union, and the Commissions worked diligently toward that goal. When the Plan first drafted was found unacceptable to either Church, a revision was made in August 1943, followed by subsequent revisions in 1944 and 1946, and the final draft of the Basis of Union which was completed on January 22, 1947. In April of that year the Executive Committee of the General Council of the Congregational and Christian Churches accepted the Plan and sent it to "the conferences, associations and churches for study and an advisory expression of opinion."²

The Basis was a simple, condensed statement of conditions by which the merger could be accomplished when both denominations agreed upon the stipulations. The name of the new body would be the United Church of Christ. The government would be "exercised through Congregations, Associations, Conferences, and the General Synod in such wise that the autonomy of each is respected in its own sphere, each having its own rights and responsibilities." To facilitate administrative matters, a constitution and bylaws would be drafted and agreed upon after the merger was completed. The declaration of faith for the new church was also to be drawn up after the completion of the union which was to be acceptable to both communions and "regarded as a testimony, and not as a test, of faith" by both churches which united. Until this final action was taken, the uniting denominations accepted the following statement "as embodying those things most surely believed and taught among us":

We believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator and Sustainer of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord and Saviour, who for us and our salvation lived and died and rose again and lives for evermore; and in the Holy Spirit, who takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us, renewing, comforting, and inspiring the souls of men.

We acknowledge one holy catholic Church, the innumerable company of those who, in every age and nation, are united by the Holy Spirit to God in Christ, are one body in Christ, and have communion with Him and with one another.

We acknowledge as part of this universal fellowship all throughout the world who profess this faith in Jesus Christ and follow Him as Lord and Saviour.

We hold the Church to be established for calling men to repentance and faith, for the public worship of God, for the confession of His name by word and deed, for the administration of the sacraments, for witnessing to the saving grace of God in Christ, for the upbuilding of the saints, and for the uni-

versal propagation of the Gospel; and in the power of the love of God in Christ we labor for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and the realization of human brotherhood.

Depending, as did our fathers, upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the consummation of the Kingdom of God; and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and for the life everlasting.³

The remainder of the Basis was devoted to provisions for maintaining the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the Board for Home Missions, the Merged Fund (for pensions), and the establishment of additional agencies as needed. It also specified that the property rights "of all bodies such as Congregations, Associations, Conferences, Synods, and corporations shall be scrupulously observed." The concluding provision stipulated that when the Basis had been approved by both denominations, according to the polity determined by each, the first meeting of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ could be called for the final consummation of the merger.⁴ A more simple plan for the union of two large and complex organizations would be difficult to imagine, for the Basis merely outlined the manner in which the strength of two denominations could be combined without an infringement upon any individual rights or fundamental doctrinal change.

While the numerous revisions to the Plan were being made, cordial fraternal relations between the two Churches were encouraged by the following action in 1944:

The General Council through its Executive Committee declared its willingness to cooperate with the General Synod or General Council of the Evangelical and Reformed Church (1) in promoting fellowship in areas where the two communions are both well represented, (2) in sending leaders of either denomination into areas where the other denomination is not numerically strong, and (3) in aiding the churches, associations, conferences, and national agencies in such endeavors as would neither presuppose nor prejudice ultimate union between the two denominations.⁵

This policy of the denomination was accepted by the Southern Convention which composed the following message at its 1946 session for Secretary Robert A. Whitten to dispatch to the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, then meeting at Landis, North Carolina:

The Southern Convention of Congregational Christian Churches, now in session in Waverly, Virginia, sends greetings and best wishes for a great session of your Synod and our hope for a closer fellowship in Kingdom building.⁶

A cordial reply was immediately received from Joshua A. Levens, president, and William C. Lyerly, secretary of the Synod:

Greetings from the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Churches to your Convention. Our desire is for a closer fellowship with you brethren and the whole Christian Church. God speed the day when the churches may be one in Christ.⁷

The conciliatory attitude of the Convention was in general that of its member organizations and was reflected in their decisions. The final Basic Plan was first sent to the conferences and churches for action and was presented in the form of the two following propositions:

RESOLUTION No. 1

Resolved that the Southern Convention of Congregational Christian Churches hereby registers its decision upon the proposals to unite the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches into the United Church of Christ, in accordance with the Basis of Union dated 22 January 1947.

RESOLUTION No. 2

Resolved that in the event of the consummation of the union our Convention hereby undertakes to continue the same relations with the United Church of Christ that it now holds with the Fellowship of the Congregational Christian Churches.

The vote on both proposals reported to Superintendent Scott's office by the churches of the Southern Convention was as follows:

Resolution No. One—Churches voting 125: 94 for with 3,204 votes; 30 against with 1,323 votes. Conferences voting 5: with 208 votes (58 negative votes).

Resolution No. Two—Churches voting 119: 103 for with 3,345 votes; 16 against with 601 votes. Conferences voting 5: all for with 227 votes (27 negative votes).⁸

The Convention delegates followed these decisive opinions at the session of 1948 by polling 133 votes in favor of Number One, with none against; and 130 votes for Number Two, with none against.⁹ In the same year the voting completed throughout the denomination was tabulated by Judge Florence E. Allen of Ohio as follows:

Total churches voting 3,954		Membership of these churches 835, 731	
		Resolution No. 1	Resolution No. 2
Churches	For	2,576 (65.5%)	2,818 (78.3%)
	Against	1,352	781
Members	For	144,221 (63.3%)	147,680 (76.2%)
	Against	83,503	46,108
Conferences	For	32 (94.1%)	31 (91.2%)
	Against	2	3
Associations	For	152 (80%)	163 (94.2%)
	Against	38	10 ¹⁰

When the balloting was concluded, the Southern Convention accepted the agreement for union as final insofar as it was concerned and began preparations to enjoy the new fellowship. Unfortunately, there were minority groups elsewhere which refused to abide by the will of the majority and their actions delayed the final consummation of the merger for nearly a decade.

When the affirmative decision was rendered by a majority of the denominational units concerned, the General Councils of each Church voted to proceed with the final details of the union. When this step in the negotiations was announced, the Cadman Memorial Church of Brooklyn, New York, instituted legal action against the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches on April 18, 1949, to halt the proceedings. The basis of this move was a disagreement over property control and financial administration, not over doctrinal differences. It is not within the scope of this history to relate in detail the lengthy and involved litigation which followed inasmuch as the Southern Convention was not directly involved in it. The legal battle culminated in 1953 when the Court of Appeals of the State of New York dismissed the complaint, thereby re-opening the door for the resumption of plans to complete the denominational merger. During the time consumed by the litigation, the majority membership of both Churches simply marked time, and when the court action was concluded, they resumed their efforts for union at the point where these had been interrupted.¹¹

While the delay encountered by the proposed union lengthened into years, the Southern Convention maintained an optimistic attitude over the outcome. Lawrence A. Leonard and A. W. Hedrick of the Evangelical and Reformed Church were welcomed to the 1952 session of the Convention as fraternal delegates. In 1956 A. Howard White, another member of that church who was also an editor of the Burlington, North Carolina, *Daily Times-News*, "was made a deliberative member of the Convention and graciously thanked for the fine work done in publicizing the sessions."¹² When a General Council meeting was called to convene in Omaha, Nebraska, June 20 through 27, 1956, to make the final decision on the merger, the following delegates were appointed to represent the Convention: J. T. Akin, George D. Alley and Frank R. Hamilton, ministers from Virginia; William J. Andes, Clyde O. Koon, L. M. Presnell, Henry R. Robinson, William T. Scott, Walstein W. Snyder, W. C. Timmons, and Carl E. Wallace, ministers from North Carolina; Mrs. Jack T. Akin and Edward P. Bresko, laymen from Virginia; Martin T. Garren, J. Mark McAdams, N. C. Monroe, Cyrus Shoffner, James E. Washburn, Jr., Mrs. F. C. Lester, and Mrs. S. H. Pell, laymen from North Carolina. F. C. Lester and W. E. Wisseman were elected dele-

gates at large, and Jesse H. Dollar and L. E. Smith also attended the meeting unofficially. Others from the Southern Convention may have been present, but there is no record of their attendance.¹³

The representatives from the Southern Convention were among the 1,500 voting delegates, 500 associate delegates, and 1,000 visitors who were present at the Omaha meeting. The principal business of the Council was to settle the proposed merger, which had then been deliberating for fourteen years, and to consider resolutions "concerning the social changes now taking place in our revolutionary world." The merger was to be decided by voting on a resolution to elect delegates to represent the Council at the first meeting of the Synod of the United Church of Christ in June of the following year at Cleveland, Ohio, at which time the denominational union would be finally consummated. The vote was 1,310 in favor of the resolution, 179 opposed, with 11 abstaining, and Moderator Albert Buckner Coe announced the result with the comment, "This is the big moment." The assembled churchmen then added *finis* to the long drawn out struggle for union by singing "reverently" the hymn, "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow." F. C. Lester, editor of the *Christian Sun*, who was present at the meeting, commented on the climax:

It was a big moment for which an overwhelming majority of the General Council had waited through the years of debate, court action, and great anxiety. At other moments in the sessions there may have been some similarity to political conventions, but this was a very solemn, religious moment when those who believed they were following the will of God for this generation joined votes and took a step forward. Cautiously, but forward the Church moves.¹⁴

The confirmation of the denominational union agreed upon at Omaha was a joyful tidings to the Southern Convention, which promptly elected delegates to attend the Synod at Cleveland. George D. Alley from Virginia and L. M. Presnell, Henry E. Robinson, William T. Scott, Walstein W. Snyder, and W. E. Wisseman from North Carolina were the ministers chosen. Martin T. Garren, James C. Washburn, and Mrs. F. C. Lester, all of North Carolina, were the lay delegates selected.¹⁵ The representatives journeyed to the Ohio city and participated in the epochal event which was described in the *Christian Sun* in these words:

With pageantry and drama befitting the occasion, two Protestant denominations of widely different heritage became one at Cleveland, Ohio, June 25, 1957. After fifteen years of conferring, voting and planning, the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches and the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church officially became the General Synod of the United Church of Christ in a beautiful and impressive ceremony.

At seven-thirty Tuesday evening, June 25, some five hundred officials, delegates and representatives of the Evangelical and Reformed Church joined a similar number of representatives of Congregational and Christian Churches and marched in a colorful ecclesiastical procession through downtown Cleveland to the Municipal Hall. Sharing places of honor in the procession were the crosses of the Christian Church, a Bible, the Christian flag and flags of the eighteen countries where the two churches have missionary work.

The solemn opening of the Bible at eight o'clock signalled the convening of the United Synod,....¹⁶

A full account of the highly impressive ceremony followed this descriptive preface. Participation in the actual event must have been a deeply emotional experience as both the joy and gravity of the occasion were impressed upon all of those who were present.

George B. Hastings, one of the Co-Moderators of the Synod, commented:

Like a mighty groundswell we move toward a new dimension of fellowship—unity not uniformity, unity of spirit, of purpose, of work and witness, toward cooperation without compromise.¹⁷

His fellow Co-Moderator, Louis W. Goebel, predicted success for the union because "we have a common spirit and purpose originating in a common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." Another veteran church leader, Roy C. Helfenstein, stated:

The countless prayers that have been offered by those who longed for our Lord's prayer to be answered,—that his disciples might be One were now definitely being answered.¹⁸

These and many similar comments expressed the opinions of the majority of the new Church leadership, although a few days previous to the climactic meeting four churches had filed suits against both denominations in which the merger was protested. Furthermore, there were some opponents to union present at Cleveland "who held newspaper interviews to prophesy to the world that this Church of Christ would not succeed."¹⁹ Unanimity is difficult to obtain at best, and it proved impossible at Cleveland, although the majority of the Church was happy with the outcome. The lawsuits were eventually settled after having been carried all the way to the United States Supreme Court, and the union was upheld and its position clarified. The new Church became fully organized on July 4, 1961, when its Constitution and Bylaws were adopted. On November 15, 1965, the final outcome of the merger was tabulated as follows:

Number of Congregational Christian Churches:

Joining the United Church	4,300	82.9%
Voting not to join the United Church	308	5.9%
Taking no action regarding joining	579	11.2%
	<u>5,187</u>	<u>100.0%</u> ²⁰

Many of the churches which did not join the new Church were either very old or completely inactive organizations, while those which did join combined their strength into a more powerful church which is growing and expanding its role in American Christianity today.

The Southern Convention was given signal recognition by the United Church, for as soon as it was formed the following offices were filled from its membership: Executive Council, Jesse H. Dollar; Commission to Draft a Constitution, Henry E. Robinson; American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Mrs. F. C. Lester and Henry E. Robinson; Board for Home Missions, George D. Alley and Mesdames W. B. Williams and W. E. Wisseman.²¹

In 1958 the Southern Convention, in session at the Christian Temple in Norfolk, Virginia, approved the dispatch of a telegram to Harvey A. Fesperman, President of the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church which was then meeting at Lenoir, North Carolina. The message proposed that the Convention and the Synod hold their 1960 meetings jointly in Burlington, North Carolina. The message also included a fraternal statement: "We rejoice with you in the United Church of Christ, and we earnestly pray that our ways may come together in strength that the name of Jesus Christ may be glorified and his great Church builded."²² A cordial reply promptly arrived from the Synod, and the Convention continued its work, satisfied that one more step toward the ecumenical goal of James O'Kelly had been accomplished.

In due course of time the Statement of Faith was drafted, and, although both the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed were approved for use in church services if desired, the Statement constituted the official expression of theological beliefs agreed upon by the General Synod for the entire denomination. It read thus:

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of
our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to his
deeds we testify:

He calls the worlds into being,
creates man in his own image

and sets before him the ways of life and death.

He seeks in holy love to save all people from aim-
lessness and sin.

He judges men and nations by his righteous will
declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified
and risen Lord,

he has come to us
 and shared our common lot,
 conquering sin and death
 and reconciling the world to himself.
 He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit,
 creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,
 binding in covenant faithful people of all ages,
 tongues, and races.
 He calls us into his church
 to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
 to be his servants in the service of men,
 to proclaim the gospel to all the world
 and resist the powers of evil,
 to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,
 to join him in his passion and victory.
 He promises to all who trust him
 forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
 courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
 his presence in trial and rejoicing,
 and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end.
 Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him. Amen.

By agreeing to adopt this Statement for the entire Church, the segment which had once been the Christian Church made no sacrifice of its cherished principles nor departed from the long established policy that its membership should not be required to subscribe to a specific creed. As planned by its framers, the Statement was a testimony of beliefs and not a doctrinal creed. The Cardinal Principles of the former Christian Church are still honored as the foundation of their fellowship and frequently appear today in church bulletins and literature or are displayed on the walls of church buildings. They have never been forgotten nor abandoned and are respected as a vital part of the Christian Church heritage.

The Southern Convention met in joint session with the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church as planned in Burlington, North Carolina, in 1960. During this meeting the future status of the Convention was discussed, with the conclusion reached that the churches should mark time until the constitution of the new church was presented before considering any changes. Melvin Dollar had been elected Associate Superintendent of the Convention June 27, 1958, with headquarters at Portsmouth, Virginia, but his resignation was announced as of May 1, 1960, and no successor to the office was elected. On November 16, 1959, Superintendent Scott had resigned, and at the Burlington session Clyde F. Fields was elected the third Superintendent of the Convention to succeed Scott on September 1, 1960.²³

As time passed, it became apparent to the churchmen that a change in the status of the Convention would be advisable in order

to fulfill its most effective role in the organization of the United Church. Accordingly, the 1962 session of the convention, meeting at Bethlehem Church near Suffolk, Virginia, authorized the appointment of a Steering Committee "to work with a similar group from the other organizations involved" to suggest a course for the future. Frank R. Hamilton, Max B. Vestal, D. Marsh McLelland, with Joe A. French in an ex-officio capacity, were the members of the Committee,²⁴ which promptly began deliberations with similar groups from the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Convention of the South of the Congregational Christian Church. The latter organization included all the black conferences in the Church. By 1964 the Committee had completed its work, and the Southern Convention, the Southern Synod, and the Convention of the South met in plenary session at Greensboro, North Carolina, in May 1964 to hear its report.

After the Steering Committee made its recommendations, the discussion was lengthy and involved, and so many proposed amendments were either adopted or rejected that the report was finally revised considerably. The substance of the proposals was to adopt the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ and form the Southern Conference of that body. The new organization would be composed of all the former Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church in North Carolina; all of the Convention of the South of the Congregational Christian Churches in North Carolina and Virginia; and all of the former Southern Convention memberbodies, except the Virginia Valley Central Conference which requested its affiliation be moved to the Central Atlantic Conference. There were numerous details by the Steering Committee to accompany these major changes. Since the entire report was considerably amended, the delegates voted to submit the report to each of the three organizations concerned separately for consideration, then to meet in joint session later in the year for a final decision.²⁵

The second meeting was also held in Greensboro on November 18, 1964. The amended report was adopted without delay but because of legal details that were still unsettled the Southern Conference could not be a legal body until the filing of the Articles of Consolidation, planned to take place on September 30, 1965. Although a year was to ensue before the organization could function, the Doxology was sung at the Greensboro meeting "as an indication of the feelings of the delegates assembled," and the following officers were elected: G. Melvin Palmer, President; W. Judson King, Vice President; John D. Xanthos, Secretary; and Walter L. Cooper, Treasurer. An Interim Board of Directors was also elected but no staff members were selected. For all practical purposes the

Southern Convention and its two sister organizations began to fade out of existence after the vote was announced at Greensboro in 1964. The last meeting of the Executive Committee of the Executive Board of the Southern Convention of Congregational Christian Churches, Incorporated, was held at Elon College, North Carolina, on August 31, 1965; and when that meeting adjourned, the Convention's name became history.²⁶

However nostalgic the loss of the time-honored organizational name was to many churchmen, no time was wasted in retrospect, for the enlarged opportunities for service commanded by the new organization demanded immediate action, and this was soon forthcoming. On September 30, 1965, William T. Scott, Chairman of the Interim Board of the Conference, at 9:50 a.m. in the Whitley Auditorium at Elon College, called to order the first meeting of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ, Incorporated. Clyde L. Fields reported that he had received a message from Thad Eure, North Carolina's Secretary of State, that the Articles of Consolidation had been filed in his office at 9:00 o'clock that morning, and the organization, under its new name, had become legal at that time.

After this announcement, Chairman Scott made the following statement to the assembled delegates:

"We gather in what is perhaps the most unusual meeting of our entire fellowship, certainly in the South. We gather here across former denominational lines and across racial lines. Here assembled, we represent a NEW CONFERENCE aborning—uniting the former Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church with 70 Churches and 16,558 members; the Convention of the South of Congregational Christian Churches, of North Carolina and Virginia with 158 Churches and 16,984 members; and the Southern Convention of Congregational Christian Churches with 186 Churches and 33,613 members in North Carolina and Southern Virginia. We form the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ with 414 Churches and 66,155 members.

"We meet as children of God; as followers of Jesus Christ. In Him we can find adequate answers to all questions. In Him we can unite our hearts and hands to do His Will as Christian brethren. As our first act in invoking God's blessings upon this meeting, let us unite our voices in singing the great hymn, 'God of Grace and God of Glory.'"²⁷

Lonnie A. Carpenter then conducted a devotional service for the meeting by reading Philippians 2:1-18. The next item on the program was the confirmation with a view toward continuance in office of the officials elected in 1964. In addition, the following were elected to "serve as co-ordinators" until the next general election of officers:

World Ministries	- Carl Wallace
Church Extension	- G. Harold Myers
Christian Social Action	- George A. Fidler
Lay Life and Work	- Mrs. W. D. Gay
Worship	- F. A. Hargett, Sr.
Health and Welfare	- Lawrence A. Leonard
Evangelism	- A. Odell Leonard
Higher Education	- J. Earl Danieleley
Christian Education	- Richard N. Rinker
Stewardship and O.C.W.M.	- W. H. Baker
Church and Ministry	- William J. Andes
Budget and Finance	- William W. Greenland
Historical	- William T. Scott, Roy E. Leinbach, Jr., Joe A. French ²⁸

With the conclusion of this organizational legislation, the Southern Conference was launched, although its new official business year did not begin until January 1, 1966. The former Convention office at Elon College was used for headquarters until 1966 when the operation was transferred to 328 West Davis Street in Burlington, North Carolina. Within a short time organizational readjustments became necessary in order to cope with the expanded responsibilities of the office, as a result of which the Conference was divided into three Associations: Western North Carolina, Eastern North Carolina, and Eastern Virginia. The title of the chief executive officer was Conference Minister and Executive Vice President, and this office has been filled by James H. Lightbourne, Jr., since its creation. The additional offices and the incumbents who fill them today are as follows: Associate Conference Minister, James W. Morrison, and Minister of Christian Education, Richard N. Rinker. Each of the three Associations has an Associate Conference Minister assigned to it: Clyde L. Fields for Eastern North Carolina, Edwin M. Alcorn for Western North Carolina, and L. Bill Simmons for Eastern Virginia.

At the close of 1971 the United Church of Christ was operating as forty conferences, with a total of 6,688 churches with 1,928,674 members. Of these, 335 churches with 59,501 members comprised the Southern Conference which also includes 18 churches which have voted not to become a part of the new Church and 37 churches which have never declared their intentions in that respect.²⁹ While these latter two groups of churches have full membership in the Southern Conference, they have no vote in the Synods of the United Church of Christ, nor do they bear the name of that organization. There has been a gradual tendency for these churches to change their status, and it is possible that they will eventually enter into fellowship with the United Church.

The gloomy prophecies made by a few skeptics in 1957 have proved to be incorrect, for the organization of the United Church of Christ neither died nor failed to function but survived, flourished and expanded. It is a live and growing evangelical Christian Church today, performing a creditable work for mankind in general and for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in this world specifically. The section of the new organization which formerly had been known as the southern Christian Church has joined two beneficial mergers happily and, on the whole, with no theological compromise or alteration of their Principles of Belief. For almost two centuries they have preserved the rights of the individual and the autonomy of each local church which James O'Kelly insisted upon so vehemently in 1794. Their only creed is, and always has been, the Bible. The very flexibility of the Christians' Principles insured a harmonious adherence to their provisions. The right of their membership to interpret the Holy Trinity in whichever manner seems correct to them is respected. Also, the privilege of the individual to choose the mode of baptism is granted, although the northern Christian churchmen on the whole have traditionally preferred immersion. It is true that the name has been changed in its wording, but there is virtually no difference in connotation between "Christian Church" and "United Church of Christ." It could be argued that there was a significant departure from the original name when "Congregational" was added to it, but this slight change brought no identification with any creed or dogma and did not basically alter the contention that Christian was a sufficient name for the Church. Furthermore, this principle simply stated a belief and was not an iron-clad rule, and no additions to the name which would not change its basic significance were precluded.

The basic concepts incorporated in the Cardinal Principles have never been altered, although some changes in the wording were made from time to time. The final version is as follows:

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only head of the church.
 2. Christian is a sufficient name for the church.
 3. The Holy Bible is a sufficient rule of faith and practice.
 4. Christian character is a sufficient test of fellowship and of church membership.
 5. The right of private judgement and liberty of conscience is a right and a privilege that should be accorded to and exercised by all.
 6. The purpose of this church will be consummated in the reformation of the world and the union of all Christians.
- It must be realized that the second Principle did not declare that the denomination could be named nothing other than Christian. The

name, United Church of Christ, is simply Christian Church in a broader form, and the adoption of this name did not abrogate the original statement.

The merger with the Congregationalists caused no change in the practices of the Christians, but the 1957 merger brought innovations. For many years the Evangelical and Reformed services had varied from a rather high church liturgical ceremony to a fairly plain one, depending upon the wishes of the local church and its minister. This is still true today, so a service in the United Church of Christ might be very simple, with no vestments for the minister or choir, although this would be the exception rather than the rule and would more likely be found in a small rural church. In others, the choir might be vested and the minister garbed in a plain academic robe, a Geneva gown with a stole, or even a cassock, surplice, and alb. The communion elements might be passed among the congregation by the church officials or dispensed by the clergyman before an altar at the front of the sanctuary. In some services one or two acolytes assist in the service, lighting the altar candles and carrying the offering plates from the collectors to the minister within the chancel. During the service either the Nicene Creed, the Apostles' Creed, or the Statement of Faith might be repeated or, more often, none would be used.

This diversity of liturgy and details in services is not an indication of the lack of denominational unity at all but a result of the practice of allowing individual choice to be exercised. The use of creeds in the services places no obligation on any member of the Church to subscribe to any of them, for the Bible is still accepted as a sufficient creed for the Church. The variation in services is merely a result of the flexibility of this principle.

In the early years of the southern Christian Church ceremonies and worship services were very simple in character, corresponding closely to those of the Presbyterians. The ministers usually wore clothes of somber hue, tailored along rather severe lines, but no vestments. Hymns, prayers by the clergyman or specified members of the congregation, and the sermon composed the Sabbath service and there was usually a mid-week prayer meeting. If the church was large enough, there was a choir costumed in ordinary street clothes. Baptism and holy communion were the two sacraments recognized by the church. The first was a simple service of either sprinkling or immersion, according to choice. Outdoor pools or ponds were used for the latter until such time as some affluent congregations could install indoor baptismal pools in their churches. The early communion services were celebrated by passing the bread among the pews by the Deacons of the church, after which the

members of the congregation filed to the front of the sanctuary and partook of the wine from a common chalice. As congregations grew larger, the use of the chalice was abandoned and the wine was passed among the pews in individual cups.

As the years of the twentieth century unfolded, the clergy became more inclined to the use of long cutaway or Prince Albert type coats, striped or dark trousers, and stiffly starched dress shirts. Vestments for the choir members came into fashion, not only in the Christian Church but in other churches which had not formerly used them. This change was gradually followed by the use of vestments by the minister: a plain black gown in most cases, with the occasional addition of a stole or academic hood. However, there was little if any change in the order of services.

The autonomy of the local church and the rights of each individual member have been preserved and protected throughout in the simple but thoroughly democratic governmental system of the United Church of Christ. Each local church has its own governing board, elected by the congregation, and termed either a Diaconate, a Consistory, or a Council; and though this board handles most of the parish affairs, the most important matters are decided by congregational vote. The next governmental agency to which the church belongs is an Association or division of the conference of which the church is a member. Each church elects its representatives to the conference of which it is a part, and the conference elects delegates to the General Synod, which is headed by a president, and constitutes the overall governing body of the Church. The local church regulates its own finances, chooses its own minister, admits and dismisses members, and has control of its real and personal property which it owns. There is no coercive power held over the local congregation, although in Paragraph Twenty-Two of the Constitution of the United Church the following admonition is made:

Actions by, or decision or advice emanating from the General Synod, a conference or an association, should be held in the highest regard by every local church.

Cordial relations with other religious denominations have always been the policy of the churches which merged in 1957. Previous to that time both the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church were active members of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America until it ceased to exist. Today the United Church of Christ is a denominational member of the Federal Council's successor, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The Southern Conference also belongs to the North Carolina Council of Churches and to the Virginia Council of Churches. Through membership in these organizations close rela-

tions are maintained with other denominations and their activities, in addition to participation in the overall religious program.

The general religious attitude of the southern Christians found its counterpart among the northern Christians, and later among the Congregationalists and the German Reformed membership. Characteristically, they have never been extreme pietists nor extreme liberals in their concept of Christian practices but have consistently adhered to a middle-of-the-road policy. Wholeheartedly a part of the Protestant ethic, the Christians have never exhibited a marked antipathy toward Roman Catholics or Jews; they have maintained amicable relations with other Protestant denominations; and they have tolerated, though perhaps have been uninfluenced by, the many sects and cults that abound in the United States.

Their church buildings conform to no set pattern of architecture and usually have somewhat plain interiors. Most have stained glass windows, which are usually memorial gifts, and adequate space is provided for the choir. Pipe or electronic organs, varying in size according to the financial means of the congregation, are found in most of the sanctuaries, for the Christians have a genuine respect for the effectiveness of music in the worship services. In many sanctuaries the communion table, with the pulpit elevated behind it, is the central feature at the front of the church. Others, especially those of most recent construction, have divided chancels with modest altars at the front of the church. Sometimes a plain cross flanked by two candlesticks are the only objects on the altar. Rarely is a painting or a crucifix found in the churches and never images or statues. Their music consists of anthems, oratorios, instrumental compositions; and their hymns include those generally used in most Protestant churches. In a few churches the congregation kneels when prayers are being offered, but in most cases the members sit in the pews with bowed heads. Almost always the sermon is the principal feature of the worship service.

Like most other evangelical denominations, the United Church of Christ observes occasions of special religious significance during the year. Christmas, Palm Sunday, Easter, Reformation Day, and Thanksgiving are commemorated with special services which may even include one at midnight on Christmas Eve and one at sunrise on Easter morning. Lent is recognized but usually with only token observances. Revival services are held regularly in most churches, although these usually are more like meetings for spiritual enrichment than highly emotional occasions. There has always been wholehearted participation in community union services on such occasions as Thanksgiving and area revival movements such as a Billy Graham Crusade.

The Church finds a cooperative attitude in keeping with its ecumenical policy. Having no credal barriers, it welcomes others to its services, open communion, and general fellowship. Three times within half a century the southern Christians have been participants in growth and progress through denominational mergers which have been successful and productive for Christianity, and today the United Church of Christ optimistically looks forward to the possibilities of great achievements in Christian union in the years ahead.

While the southern Christians and their fellow members of the United Church of Christ today are firm believers in the ecumenical movement, they believe that it can only be accomplished by the abandonment of dogma and creeds, and not by substituting new ones for the old. This was O'Kelly's concept in the eighteenth century, and it has been cherished by his followers and their associates ever since. The United churchmen are not aggressive in the matter but stand ever ready and willing to collaborate with any who desire to negotiate means of uniting the followers of Jesus Christ into one body in this world. Unitarianism, predestination, apostolic succession, episcopacy, the doctrine of the elect, rigid Trinitarianism, insistence upon immersion, and other tenets have no place in the United Church of Christ, although no aspersions are cast on those who subscribe to them, and the United membership works in harmonious coexistence with its sister religious denominations. As the bicentennial of their founding draws near, the southern Christians can find deep satisfaction in the fact that they have endured for two centuries with personal interpretation of the Scriptures their only creed, without an autocratic governmental hierarchy, and with the welfare of their fellowmen at heart; and they can look forward to further centuries of growth on the same basis.

Footnotes

- ¹ *Digest of Minutes of Meetings of the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches of the United States 1931-1965*, (New York: Published Under the Direction of the Executive Committee of the General Council, 1971), 36-37. Hereinafter cited as *Digest*.
- ² *Ibid*, 37.
- ³ *Year Book of the United Church of Christ, 1957*, (Privately Printed, 1957), 173-174. Hereinafter cited as *Year Book, 1957*. The Basis of Union included in this record is almost an exact copy of the 1947 draft.
- ⁴ *Ibid*, 175-189.
- ⁵ *Digest*, 36.
- ⁶ *Annual 1946*, 18.
- ⁷ *Ibid*.
- ⁸ *Annual 1948*, 16-17.
- ⁹ *Ibid*, 32.
- ¹⁰ *Digest*, 43.
- ¹¹ *Ibid*, 37-38.
- ¹² *Annual 1952*, 3-4; *Annual 1956*, 6.
- ¹³ *Sun*, June 21, 1956.
- ¹⁴ *Sun*, July 24, 1956.
- ¹⁵ *Year Book, 1957*, 150.
- ¹⁶ *Sun*, June 25, 1957. See also Appendix E.
- ¹⁷ *Sun*, July 16, 1957.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid*.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*.
- ²⁰ *Digest*, iv, vii.
- ²¹ *Sun*, July 16, 1957.
- ²² *Annual 1958*, 4, 8.
- ²³ *Annual 1960*, 30, 34-35, 38, 99.
- ²⁴ *Annual 1962*, 14, 20.
- ²⁵ *Annual 1964*, 32-34.
- ²⁶ *Annual 1964*, 112-114; 128-129; *Annual 1965*, 29-30.
- ²⁷ *Year Book of the United Church of Christ, 1966*, (Privately Printed, 1966), 4.
- ²⁸ *Ibid*, 5.
- ²⁹ These figures furnished by the office of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Notes On Sources

In North Carolina the principal depositories for primary material on the state's history is the State Department of Archives and History and the State Library, both at Raleigh; the North Carolina Collection and the Southern Historical Collection, both in the library of the State University at Chapel Hill. Similar material in Virginia can be found at the Virginia State Library and the Virginia Historical Society, both in Richmond. The Church History Room at Elon College is the outstanding collection of material on the Christian Church, while the Congregational Library at Boston contains the records of the Congregational Church and the Congregational Christian Church. The Disciples of Christ Historical Society in Nashville is the primary source of material of that Church. Pertinent material on the Methodists and other churches is contained in the excellent collections at Duke University, Drew University, the University of Chicago, Garrett Theological Seminary, Vanderbilt University, the Methodist Theological Seminary, and Lovely Lane Museum. Occasional rare items are found at the Boston Athenaeum, the American Antiquarian Society, and the Library of Congress.

Primary sources for the career of James O'Kelly and the Schism include O'Kelly's published works: *Essay on Negro Slavery*, (Philadelphia, 1787); *An Address to the Christian Church Under the Similitude of an Elect Lady and her Children*, (Richmond: undated); *The Author's Apology for Protesting Against the Methodist Episcopal Government*, (Richmond: 1798); *A Vindication of the Author's Apology, with Reflection on the Reply, and a Few Remarks on Bishop Asbury's Annotation on his Book of Discipline*, (Raleigh: 1801); *Hymns and Spiritual Songs, Designed For The Use of Christians*, (Raleigh: 1816); *The Divine Oracles Consulted: or an Appeal to the Law and Testimony*, (Hillsborough: 1820); *Letters From Heaven Consulted*, (Hillsborough: 1822); *The Prospect Before Us*, (Hillsborough: 1824). Also basic are Nicholas Snethen's *A Reply to An Apology for Protesting Against the Methodist Episcopal Government*, (Philadelphia: 1800); and *An Answer to James O'Kelly's Vindication of his Apology, and an Explanation of the Reply*, (Philadelphia: 1802). Contemporaneous data are found in the *Diary of John Early*, (*The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 1920); the *Diary of Richard N. Venable*, (*Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 1920); and the following which are either unpublished or have been partially published: *Journal of William Colbert*; *Journal of John Kobler*; *Journal of Freeborn Garrettson*; *William McKendree Diary From May 7, 1790 to Feby. 18, 1791*; *A Journal and Travel of James Meacham, 1789-1797*; *Journal of Thomas Morrell*; *Journal of Thomas Rankin, 1773-1777*; *Journal of Nelson Read, 1778-1782*; *Journal of George Wells*; and *Journal of Jeremiah Norman*. The *Letterbook of Stith Mead*, (unpublished), is important, and *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury*, (Nashville: 1958), has a wealth of vital information. Another important source is McLean, *Sketch of Rev. Philip Gatch*, (Cincinnati: 1854), and the Philip Gatch Papers which contain the original *Sketch* and other items. The Ezekiel Cooper Papers contain an abundance of source material, and *The Life of the Reverend Devereux Jarratt*, (Baltimore: 1806), is important.

Vital primary data are contained in the *Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for the years 1773-1828*, (New York: 1840). Of equal importance are *Proceedings of the Bishop and Presiding Elders of the Methodist Episcopal Church,*, (Baltimore: 1789); and *Minutes Taken at a Council of the Bishop and delegated Elders*, (Baltimore: 1790). Jesse Lee's *A Short History of the Methodists in the United States of America,*, (Baltimore: 1810), is also valuable as the work of a contemporary.

Among the general works for this period, William Guirey's *History of the Episcopacy*, (Privately printed: undated), has considerable merit. There is some value in

Bangs, *A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, (New York: 1838), though McTyeire, *A History of Methodism*, (London: 1885), is far superior to it in every respect. Bennett, *Memorials of Methodism in Virginia*, (Richmond: 1871), and Grissom, *History of Methodism in North Carolina*, (Nashville: 1905), are the most comprehensive works of the Methodists in those two states. MacClenny, *The Life of the Rev. James O'Kelly and the Early History of the Christian Church in the South*, (Raleigh: 1910), is the outstanding biography of the minister. A valuable modern interpretation of the secessionist is in Norwood, "James O'Kelly-Methodist Maverick," (*Methodist History*, 1966). An excellent account of the Schism is in Bucke, *The History of American Methodism*, (New York: 1964), though an even more detailed and definite treatment can be found in Kilgore, *The James O'Kelly Schism in the Methodist Episcopal Church*, (Mexico City: 1963).

For the early period of the Christian Church, articles in the *Herald of Gospel Liberty* furnish excellent primary data. Pertinent material is also contained in the *Christian Herald* after 1818, both the *Christian Messenger* and the *Gospel Luminary* after 1826, and the *Christian Palladium* after 1832. Vital church statistics are recorded in the three extant copies of *The Christian Register and Almanac*, (New London: 1821; Portsmouth: 1823; and Exeter: 1842). The proceedings of the early Christian conferences copied by Wilbur Ernest MacClenny from original lost by fire in 1923 are basic material. Thomas, *The Life of the Pilgrim Joseph Thomas*, (Winchester, 1817); *The Personal Journal of Elder Christy Sine*, (unpublished); and Smith, *The Life, Conversion, Preaching, Travels, and Sufferings of Elias Smith*, (Boston: 1840), are all firsthand accounts of the activities of the Christians in this period.

Important secondary and general sources for the early Christian years include McWhinney, *Memoir of Elder Isaac N. Walter*, (Cincinnati: 1857), which is a biography of a significant missionary. Necessary for a full understanding of Methodist problems of the period are the three provocative works of McCaine: *The History and Mystery of Methodist Episcopacy*, (Baltimore: 1827); *A Defence of the Truth*, (Baltimore: 1829); and *Letters On The Organization and Early History Of The Methodist Episcopal Church*, (Boston: 1850). However, the most complete and scholarly account of the period is Drinkhouse, *History of Methodist Reform*, (Baltimore, 1899). The principal significance of Paris, *The History of the Methodist Protestant Church*, (Baltimore: 1849), is that it was in large measure responsible for the scholarly doctrinal analysis of Wellons, *The Christians, South, Not Unitarian in Sentiment*, (Suffolk: 1860). Both Ware, *Barton Warren Stone*, (St. Louis: 1932), and West, *Barton Warren Stone, Early American Advocate of Christian Unity*, (Nashville: 1954), are excellent studies for a complete understanding of the western Christians.

In the period from 1844 to 1870, invaluable data are contained in the incomplete files of the *Christian Sun*, and considerable pertinent facts are found in the columns of the *Hillsborough Recorder*. The *Minutes of the Annual Session of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference*, published annually in pamphlet form are extant for most of the years between 1850 and 1870 and contain vital data. Of similar importance are the *Proceedings of the Southern Christian Convention . . . 1856*, (Baltimore: 1856); the *Proceedings of the General Convention of the Christian Church, Including the Sessions of 1866, 1867, and 1870,*, (Suffolk: 1870); and *The Principles and Government of the Christian Church:*, (Suffolk: 1867).

General works for this period include Freese, *A History and Advocacy of the Christian Church*, (Philadelphia: 1852), which is of interest, and the highly valuable Wellons and Howell, *Life and Labors of Rev. William Brock Wellons,*, (Raleigh: 1881).

After 1870 the official records of the Southern Christian Convention, the various conferences and the auxiliary organizations of the Church in the South were published each year in the *Christian Annual* (not to be confused with a publication of the same name containing the records of the northern Christian Church). The files of the *Christian Sun*, virtually complete after 1870, contain a wealth of basic material, and considerable is contained in the *Herald of Gospel Liberty*. *The Quadrennial Book—1886—of the American Christian Convention*, (Dayton: 1886), and *The Quadrennial Book, 1891, of the American Christian Convention*, (Dayton: 1891), are also primary official sources.

The definitive general work for this period is Morrill, *A History of the Christian Denomination*, (Dayton: 1912). Second in importance is Kernodle, *Lives of Christian Ministers*, (Richmond, 1909), and third, Humphreys, *Memoirs of Deceased Christian Ministers*,, (Dayton: 1880). Also an excellent general source is Barrett, *The Centennial of Religious Journalism*, (Dayton: 1908).

The official records of the *American Christian Convention*, (privately published by the Convention), contain data relative to the union of the Christian Church in 1922. From that year until the Congregational Christian merger, the proceedings of the *General Convention of the Christian Church in the United States*, (privately published by the Convention), contain the official record. Invaluable primary data on the merger of 1931 are contained in Minton's typescript, *Some Little Known Aspects of the Congregational Christian Merger*, (Philadelphia: 1963). After the merger the official records are contained in the *Year Book of the Congregational Christian Church*, (privately printed by the Church annually), and important material on the formation of the United Church of Christ is contained in the *Digest of Meetings of The General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches of the United States 1931-1965*, (New York: 1971).

Relatively few supplementary sources have been used in the latter part of the manuscript as the files of the *Christian Annual* and the *Christian Sun* after 1900 contain most of the primary material on the activities of the southern Christian Church. In addition to the essential sources discussed in these Notes, all material is of some value and fully cited in the footnotes.

APPENDIX A

Ministers Of The Southern Christian Church 1794-1931

This list has been compiled from the existing records of the Southern Christian Convention, the various Church conferences, religious periodicals, and newspapers. Some names may have been omitted, because the records are incomplete; and there are probably duplications because of differences encountered in the spelling of names. In some cases different spellings of the same name have been indicated. Few, if any, biographical details are known about some of the ministers who served in the early period of the Church's activity, though most of those listed were well-known members of the clergy of the southern Christian Church.

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Abercrombie, H. M. | Apple, J. F. |
| Adams, Joseph | Apple, Solomon |
| Albright, Daniel | Armstead, Samuel |
| Albright, H. A. | Atkinson, James Oscar |
| Albright, J. W. | Ausley, J. Bennett |
| Albright, Joseph | Bailey, William O. |
| Albright, S. W. | Baits (Bates), Robert |
| Alerman, John | Baldwin, H. B. |
| Alexander, P. R. | Baldwin, M. A. |
| Alexander, W. S. | Ball, John T. |
| Alger, Z. T. | Ballard, F. D. |
| Aljoe, E. H. | Banks, A. T. |
| Allemong, Casper | Barbee, A. P. |
| Allen, Chastine (Chastien) | Barber, J. O. |
| Allen, J. H. | Barber, J. Q. |
| Allen, John | Barber, N. |
| Allen, M. F. | Barber, T. W. |
| Allen, Patrick W. | Barham, Nicholas J. |
| Allen, Solomon | Barnes, J. W. |
| Allen, W. M. | Barnet, John M. |
| Allred, J. M. | Barney, D. A. |
| Almond, Edward | Barney, John H. |
| Alred, J. E. | Barr, Lewis E. |
| Alston, C. J. | Barrett, B. Mills |
| Alston, M. F. | Barrett, Bagwell |
| Alston, N. | Barrett, Burwell |
| Amason (Amerson), J. E. | Barrett, D. P. |
| Anderson, Albert Gallatin | Barrett, Elisha N. |
| Anderson, Charles | Barrett, J. Pressley |
| Anderson, James | Barrett, J. William |
| Andes, A. W. | Barrett, Mills |
| Apple, Abner | Barrett, Mills Burwell |
| Apple, Alfred | Barrett, Robert E. |
| Apple, Cornelius A. | Barrett, Stephen S. |

Barton, Levi W. N.
 Bashaw, Thomas
 Baskerville, H. S.
 Bates, P. T.
 Beale, Edwin William
 Beebe, G. A.
 Bennett, S. A.
 Beougher, S. L.
 Berryman, Edward T.
 Berryman, John D.
 Berryman, William J.
 Black, B. F.
 Black, B. H.
 Blackville, H. L.
 Bland, Joseph H.
 Blue, E. J.
 Boggs, J. R.
 Bolding, Tapley
 Booker, Joseph
 Boone, C. Atlas
 Booth, H. S.
 Bottom, J. W.
 Bowman, John
 Bowman, William
 Boyd, G. S.
 Boykin, William H.
 Bradshaw, Elisha
 Brady, E. C.
 Brady, William G.
 Bragg, William N.
 Brewer, W. H.
 Briggs, Tabitha
 Bright, A. A.
 Brittle, Richie Irvin
 Brodie, J. A.
 Brodie, R. B.
 Brooks, J. A.
 Brothers, A. R.
 Brown, B. H.
 Brown, G. W.
 Brown, J. C. N.
 Brown, J. H.
 Brown, John W.
 Brown, R. F.
 Brown, William R.
 Bryant, M. L.
 Bullard, Chester
 Bullock, B. W.
 Bullock, Benjamin
 Bullock, P.
 Bullock, R. D.
 Burger, Henry
 Burke, Isaac A.
 Burnett, A. P.
 Burrow, John
 Busbess, B.
 Butler, H. H.
 Butler, M. W.
 Butt, Francis
 Butts, Edward
 Buxton, James
 Byrd, S. B.
 Byrum, M.D.
 Cagle, Isham
 Cains, William D.
 Callahan, Jacob
 Campbell, A. S.
 Carden, J. S.
 Carpenter, W. C.
 Carter, C. W.
 Carter, E. M.
 Carter, H. W.
 Carter, W. E.
 Caviness, H. C.
 Caviness, H. E.
 Chadwick, J. B.
 Chaffin, William
 Charnock, Roger
 Cheek, Maggie L.
 Chewning, M. D.
 Christian, Walter
 Christmas, R.
 Chustian, Walter
 Clap (Clapp), William
 Clark, Charles
 Clark, R.
 Clem, H. Russell
 Clem, W. M.
 Clements, William G.
 Clifton, Azel
 Clifton, J. M.
 Clifton, Joel
 Clifton, John
 Cline, George
 Cloud, Adam
 Coats, J. A.
 Coats, Annie
 Coble, R. H.
 Cofield, Lewis
 Cofield, T. G.
 Cogans, D.
 Coker, Eli
 Cole, J. N.
 Cole, Jesse K.
 Colley, J. Calvin
 Collier, Martha F.

- Comer, J. R.
 Compton, L. W.
 Conner, Thomas
 Cook, E. A.
 Cook, Jarratt W., Jr.
 Cook, Jarratt W., Sr.
 Cook, R.
 Cook, William U.
 Cooper, A. J.
 Cooper, B. A.
 Copeland, Justin
 Copeland, Samuel
 Copland, E. A.
 Copland, James M.
 Corbin, Philip S. P.
 Cornic, B. F.
 Costen, Richard H.
 Cotten, E. T.
 Cotterill, Thomas
 Couchman, Philip
 Coulter, Roy D.
 Cowan, H. G.
 Cox, H. V.
 Cox, J. O.
 Cox, L. I.
 Crank, William
 Craven, Anderson
 Craven, Lewis
 Craven, S. L.
 Craven, Thomas G.
 Craven, Thomas J.
 Craven, William M.
 Crawford, V. T.
 Cross, L. C.
 Crowder, W. T.
 Crump, C. H.
 Crumpler, L. P.
 Crumpler, R. P.
 Crutchfield, Gaither C.
 Crutchfield, H. E.
 Culpepper, Peter
 Cummings, J. C.
 Cummings, W. F.
 Cunningham, E. C.
 Cutchin, J. N.
 Dameron, William
 Daniel, W. J. W.
 Darden, Lewis
 Davenport, Richard
 Davidson, John
 Davis, Andrew
 Davis, George
 Davis, Henry
 Davis, Ishmael
 Davis, John L.
 Davis, S.
 Davis, W. D.
 Dawson, F. B.
 Dawson, Thomas B.
 Dean, T. J.
 Deans (Deanes), Daniel T.
 Dease, Thomas
 Debruler, Micajah
 Deese, Thomas
 Demorest, R. D. H.
 Demorest, R. H.
 Denham, J. A.
 Denison, Warren Hathaway
 Denton, J. A.
 Dewit, Samuel D.
 Dicken, William
 Diggs, John L.
 Dillard, I.
 Dixon, F. C.
 Dixon, Molo
 Dofflemyer, D. W.
 Dofflemyer, David
 Dofflemyer, J. W.
 Dofflemyer, William A.
 Doherty, William B.
 Dollar, Carl C.
 Dollar, C. M.
 Dollar, J. D.
 Dollar, J. D., Jr.
 Dollar, Jesse H.
 Dooly, R.
 Dowd, S.
 Dowding, H. W.
 Dowding, R. W.
 Dozier, Cadez
 Drake, G. W.
 Drumwright, Thomas J.
 Dugger, W. H.
 Duke, L. J.
 Duke, P. L.
 Dunn, George Washington
 Dunn, Hugh S.
 Dupree (Dupray), Arthur
 Earp, B. J.
 Easterwood, Ellis J.
 Eastes (Estes), George D.
 Eaton, J. R.
 Edmanson, C. J.
 Edwards, D. D.
 Edwards, F. H.
 Edwards, W. J.

- Elder, H. W.
 Elder, J. W.
 Elder, James D.
 Elder, John D.
 Elder, T. H.
 Elder, W. H.
 Elder, W. W.
 Elder, Wytch M. J.
 Elliott, M. S.
 Ellis, A. B.
 Ellis, Stephen I.
 Elmore, A. J.
 Emery, J. T.
 Enoch, I. B.
 Evans, C. L.
 Evans, D. A.
 Evans, Ellis
 Evans, Joseph
 Evans, Shubal G.
 Farrar, J. D.
 Farrar, R. H.
 Farrell, John N.
 Faucett, P.
 Faulk, J. J.
 Faulk, W. T.
 Fay, Samuel
 Fears, William
 Felton, C. J.
 Fentress, W. H.
 Fisher, George
 Fisher, Park W.
 Fix, Joseph W.
 Fleming, F. H.
 Fleming, H. J.
 Fleming, John C.
 Fleming, Patrick Henry
 Fletcher, H. A.
 Fletcher, W. A.
 Fletcher, W. D.
 Flippo, O. F.
 Flory, Edwin B.
 Flowers, A. R.
 Fogleman, J. D.
 Fogleman, J. U.
 Fogleman, L. W.
 Fonville, J. W.
 Ford, W. H.
 Foster, J. L.
 Foster, Jonathan
 Fowler, Sterling W.
 Fowler, Thomas J.
 Foy (Fay), Samuel
 Franklin, William
 Franks, Anthony
 Franks, J. E.
 Franks, William H.
 French, Edward J.
 French, Joe A.
 Fuller, Jonathan
 Fuller, W. B.
 Fulton, H. C.
 Fuquay, J. W.
 Gaines, R. R.
 Gant, Henry
 Garland, A. R.
 Garmen (Garman), W. H.
 Garrison, J. D.
 Garrison, J. E.
 Gerringier, Carr E.
 Gibson, James K.
 Gilbreath, Robert
 Gilbreath, William
 Gile, John
 Gill, Franklin E.
 Gill, Philip
 Glendinning (Glendenning), William
 Golladay, D. C.
 Goodrich, John
 Goodson, I. D. C.
 Goodwin, Henry
 Graham, F. C.
 Graham, T.
 Graham, Zimri
 Gray, F. W.
 Gray, G. W.
 Gray, H. M.
 Gray, H. T.
 Gray, John
 Gray, T. W.
 Gray, W. T.
 Green, Edward F.
 Green, Exum
 Green, George J.
 Green, James Y.
 Green, John
 Green, R.
 Green, Thomas Jackson
 Greggs (Gregg), C. W.
 Gregory, B.
 Griffiee, James
 Griffin, Lorenzo A.
 Griffin, Thacker V.
 Griffin, Thatcher
 Grimes, William
 Guirey, William
 Gunter, Richard

- Gurganous, Jesse
 Hackett, Joseph
 Hafferty, _____
 Haggard, David
 Haggard, Rice
 Hall, Abner
 Hall, B. F.
 Hall, G. T.
 Hall, H. B.
 Hallon, Thomas
 Hamilton, C. J.
 Hamlin, Henry
 Hammer, M. E.
 Hanks, John
 Hanson, A. M.
 Hanson, C. W.
 Hardcastle, Howard Scott
 Hardy, Thomas
 Harrell, J. W.
 Harrell, Stanley Claudius
 Harris, C. A.
 Harris, J. S.
 Harris, Perseus E.
 Harrison, John Q.
 Harrison, John W.
 Harrod, B. C.
 Harrod, J. T.
 Harshbarger, A.
 Hartley, Joseph
 Harvey, C. T.
 Harward (Harwood), W. D.
 Hatch, John W.
 Hatchett, Joseph
 Hatley, John
 Haw, James
 Hawkins, T. H.
 Hawkins, R. L.
 Hayden, George H.
 Hayes, Henry B.
 Hayes, James
 Hayes, John
 Hayes, W. H.
 Hayes, W. N.
 Hayes, William M.
 Hays (Hayes), Henry
 Hayworth, W. W.
 Hazel, A. A.
 Hazel, Henderson
 Headley, Orman T.
 Heard, C. C.
 Heard, H. R.
 Heath, J.
 Helfenstein, Roy C.
 Henderson, J. A.
 Henderson, J. W.
 Herndon, W. T.
 Hiatt, R. W.
 Hicks, J. P.
 Hiatt, John N.
 Higgs, N. E.
 Hill, E. D.
 Hilliard, H. C.
 Hines, H. L.
 Hines, W. J. B.
 Hinton, Joseph B.
 Hinton, Oscar
 Hiott, R. N.
 Hobby, James I.
 Hobby, James J.
 Holder, G. M.
 Holderby, G. A. B.
 Holland, John
 Holland, Robert Howell
 Holloway, A. J.
 Holloway, Lazarus
 Holloway, Zachariah
 Holman, Hardy
 Holt, Jeremiah W.
 Holt, John R.
 Honeycutt, Nathaniel B.
 Hook, A. H.
 Hook, W. C.
 Hooper, William
 Hooton, John
 Hopkins, Burwell N.
 Horn, D. G.
 Horton, Nash
 Horton, Noah
 House, Paul
 House, Robert Lee
 Houser, David
 Howard, B. F.
 Howard, B. J.
 Howard, W. W.
 Howell, S. A.
 Howell, Stith A.
 Howell, W. W.
 Howsare, McDaniel C.
 Huckaby, A. C.
 Hudleston, Willis
 Hughes, J. H.
 Humble, Peter P.
 Hunnicutt, N. B.
 Hunt, G. D.
 Hunt, G. M.
 Hunt, G. S.

- Hunt, G. W.
 Hunt, S. H.
 Hurd, G. D.
 Hurley, Malcolm L.
 Hurst, Archimedes Piper
 Hurst, Alfred Wesley
 Hurst, G. D.
 Hurst, G. M.
 Hurst, M. G.
 Hurst, W. G.
 Hurst, W. J.
 Ingram, Pressley
 Iseley (Isley), A. F.
 Iseley, Alfred
 Iseley, Eli Tinnin
 Jackson, James
 Jackson, Peter L.
 Jackson, Matthew W.
 James, John
 Jarrell, E. G.
 Jay, W. M.
 Jean, E. T.
 Jeffreys, Jackson
 Jeter, Thomas E.
 Johnson, Isaac Walter
 Johnson, J. A.
 Johnson, Jacob
 Johnson, J. Fuller
 Johnson, J. Lee
 Johnson, J. W.
 Johnson, K. B.
 Johnson, L. F.
 Johnson, R. I.
 Johnson, Richard
 Jones, B. D.
 Jones, C. C.
 Jones, C. J., Jr.
 Jones, David F.
 Jones, Elwood W.
 Jones, George
 Jones, Giles B.
 Jones, J. A.
 Jones, J. H.
 Jones, J. T.
 Jones, Jesse
 Jones, John A.
 Jones, M. A.
 Jones, R. H.
 Jones, T. H.
 Jones, W. F.
 Jones, William A.
 Jordan, Thomas
 Jordan, William S.
 Jourdan, William D.
 Joyner, Thomas W.
 Judd, John
 Julian, M. P.
 Julian, W. R.
 Kearns (Kerns), B. F.
 Kees, Edgar T.
 Keith, F. M.
 Kendall, A. B.
 Kent, John
 Kerr, Daniel Wilson
 Keys, D. A.
 Kibler, A. J.
 Kidwell, John S.
 King, B. R.
 Kiracofe, N. B.
 Kirbye, J. Edward
 Kitchen, Ethelred
 Kitchen, J. F.
 Kitchen, J. T.
 Kitchen, John
 Klapp, Peter T.
 Klapp, S. B.
 Knight, J. C.
 Knight, J. V.
 Knight, J. W.
 Knight, K.
 Knight, W. R.
 Knight, William
 Knowles, Walter B.
 Laine, William J.
 Lambeth, John
 Lambeth, Lovick
 Lambeth, S. S.
 Lampree, William
 Landsdown, Z. M.
 Lane, Richard
 Lane, W. J.
 Lankford, George Otis
 Lankford, S. D.
 Lanphier, William
 Lassiter, Lucius Lee
 Lawrence, John S.
 Lawrence, W. W.
 Lawton, J. M.
 Ledbetter, J. A.
 Lee, Henderson
 Leeper, Robert
 Lemay, John P.
 Leslie, Robert
 Lester, Fletcher C.
 Lett, M. F.
 Levister, T. J.

- Lewis, Frank H.
 Lightfoot, S. N. B.
 Lightbourne, Albert Willis
 Lightbourne, James H., Sr.
 Lightbourne, Victor
 Livesay, John
 Lievsay, Joshua
 Lockhart, James
 Long, Daniel Albright
 Long, H. E.
 Long, James
 Long, S. L.
 Long, William Samuel
 Lowdermilk, Benjamin Harrison
 Lowe, T. N.
 Luke, J. W.
 Lynam, S. M.
 Lynam, Sion H.
 Lynn, W. L.

 McAbee (McAhee), A. N.
 McBroom, H. N.
 McBroom, J. H.
 McCarty, R.
 McCauley, Joseph Early
 McClean, W. M.
 McClendon, L. A.
 McClure, David H.
 McCoy, A. M.
 McCullen, Lewis
 McCulloch, Josiah
 McCullough, Peter
 McCully, Josiah
 McCurtney, John
 McDaniel, C. A.
 McDaniel, John
 McDonald, Crocket
 McDonald, John
 McDowell, J.
 McGaughy, William
 McGee, Calloway
 McGowan, Robert Pidcock
 McKenney, D. T.
 McKinly, E. S.
 McKinney, D. T.
 McKinney, R.
 McLeod, D. B.
 McLeod, Daniel
 Mabry, J. H.
 Madison, L. C.
 Madison, Levin Cary
 Madren, S. E.
 Malone, C. G.
 Mangum, L. W.

 Mann, Alton B.
 Mann, Joseph
 Manning, John Newton
 Manning, William I.
 Manning, W. J.
 Mapp, W. H.
 Mardis, Reuben
 Marsh, W. S.
 Marshall, Abel
 Marston, L. P.
 Martin, J. C.
 Martin, James G.
 Martin, W. C.
 Mason, Joseph
 Massey, J. A.
 Massy (Massey), J. W.
 Matthews, James E.
 Matthews, Mansel W.
 Matthews, W. S.
 Mayfield, John
 Maynard, J. R.
 Maxey, Dosha
 Meacham, W. T.
 Meadows, J. W.
 Michaux, J. L.
 Midgett, W. S.
 Milam, J. H.
 Millar, Nelson
 Millard, David
 Miller, Abram
 Miller, Frederick
 Minnis, James M.
 Moffitt, D. Rufus
 Moffitt, H. T.
 Moffitt, Thomas C.
 Moffitt, William D.
 Mont, R. R.
 Moore, Ephraim D.
 Moore, H. C.
 Moore, William
 Moore, Wilson C.
 More, William
 Morgan, J. F.
 Morris, T.
 Mulkey (Mulky), Isaac
 Mulky, John
 Mulky, Philip
 Murphy, G. W.
 Murray, Joseph A.

 Nance, Clement
 Nash, Thomas
 Neese, James L.
 Nelson, Ashbel S.

Newberry, F. M.
 Newman, Charles Everette
 Newman, John Urquhart
 Newman, Nathaniel Gross
 Northcross, John

Office, John
 Ogden, Benjamin
 O'Kelly, Francis D.
 O'Kelly, James
 O'Kelly, John P.

Olive, Abel
 Oliver, L. E.
 Orr, J. B.

Overton, E. G.

Page, N. H.

Park, M.

Parker, George

Parker, J. C.

Parker, J. W.

Parker, Jonathan

Parkhill, John H.

Parks, Lewis

Parry, W. D.

Parson, D. F.

Paschall, Wesley W.

Pasley, R.

Patton, J. W.

Patton, John W.

Paul, John

Pearce, G. A.

Pearson, J. E.

Pedigo, Robert

Peel, C. C.

Peel, R. H.

Peeler, Abner

Pendleton, Coleman

Pennell, James

Perry, William D.

Petty, John T.

Pettyford, Alfred

Phillips, W. H.

Pinnix, J. W.

Pittman, Thomas

Pittman, W. T.

Pledge, Murrel

Pollard, Marvin Alexander

Pollard, M. R.

Pool, Hanson

Pope, James

Portlock, J. E.

Porter, M. P.

Poste, Zenas Alfonso

Pounds, T. A.

Powers, A. G. B.

Poythress, O. D.

Prather, Leonard

Prather, Robert R.

Predy, R.

Price, Elisha

Price, George

Price, William J.

Prickett, H. W.

Pritchard, J. W.

Proctor, William G.

Punshon, Robert

Pusey, E. G.

Ragland, L. C.

Rainey, Benjamin

Rainey, E. H.

Ralston, C. J.

Ramsay, John

Randolph, Elisha

Randolph, Robert

Rawles, David

Rawls, J. W.

Rawls, Robert

Rawls, Uriah

Ray, T.

Reach, W. H.

Reddick, J. W.

Reed (Read), Clement

Reese, C. L.

Reese, Vinson

Reeves, Benjamin

Reeves, Thomas

Reeves, Willis

Reid, J. H.

Respass, Frederick

Rice, A.

Rice, E.

Rich, Anthony J.

Richard, James

Richards, John

Richardson, C. W.

Richardson, W. B.

Ricks, Charles

Ricks, Robert Anthony

Riddick, Armstead

Riddle, C. B.

Riddle, O. B.

Roach, Killis

Roach, W. A.

Roach, W. H.

Roberts, Jesse M.

Roberts, J. W.

Roberts, John

- Robertson, H. G.
 Robertson (Robinson), John
 Robinson, H. S.
 Robinson, Joseph T.
 Rodgers, N. L.
 Rodgers, W. A.
 Rofo, Benjamin
 Rollins, Frederick
 Rollins, J. M.
 Rollins, William
 Rooks, W.
 Rose, Benjamin
 Rountree, H. E.
 Rowland, C. H.
 Ruse, C. L.
 Rush, Anthony
 Russel, Andrew
 Russell, E. W.
 Russell, H.
 Ryan, C. C.
 Sailer, P. S.
 Samuels, J. E.
 Scholz, Herbert
 Scott, Isaac
 Scott, John A.
 Scott, John O.
 Scott, W. S.
 Scott, William Tate
 Scotten, A. K.
 Scotten, W. T.
 Scroggs, J. R.
 Seal, P. S.
 Sellars, E. L.
 Sewell, Jesse
 Shadix, R. P.
 Shaw, A.
 Shelton, Charles Eldred
 Shepherd, V. D.
 Sheppard, A. H.
 Short, C. E.
 Short, E. D.
 Short, J. W.
 Shurtleff, James, Jr.
 Simmons, James M.
 Sine, Christy
 Skellette, W. W.
 Sketer, Jacob
 Sled, John
 Smith, A. J.
 Smith, B. L.
 Smith, George L.
 Smith, H. S.
 Smith, H. Shelton
 Smith, James
 Smith, John
 Smith, Jubilee
 Smith, Leon Edgar
 Smith, Levin J.
 Smith, Nathan
 Smith, R. O.
 Sneed, William
 Snethen, Abraham
 Snipes, E. M.
 Sorrell, M. J.
 Sorrell, M. T.
 Sorrell, W. J.
 Sparrow, D. H.
 Spence, D. M.
 Spratt, W. D.
 Stack, E. L.
 Stack, L. E.
 Staley, Martin
 Staley, William Wesley
 Standford, Archibald
 Staunton, William H.
 Stephens, H. S.
 Stephens, R. S.
 Stephenson, W. J.
 Stinson, D. R.
 Stone, Francis A.
 Stover, _____
 Stowe, W. R.
 Strickland, E. T.
 Stringer, Daniel
 Stroud, T. W.
 Strouds, C. A.
 Strowd, J. W.
 Stuart, J. C.
 Sumler, J. S.
 Sumner, W. E.
 Sutcliffe, M. W.
 Sutcliffe, W. R.
 Swan, C. H.
 Swank, C. H.
 Swan, C. W.
 Swift, George A.
 Swift, Job S.
 Tampkin, John
 Tatem, J. A.
 Tatem, Nathaniel N.
 Tatem, Nathaniel P.
 Tatem, William
 Taylor, A. M.
 Taylor, Herman C.
 Taylor, J. J.
 Taylor, John

Terrell, W. B.	Ward, Simeon
Thacker, Z. T.	Warren, James
Thomas, Jospeh	Warren, John H.
Thomas, William	Watkins, Walter
Thompson, William	Watson, M.
Thompson, L. E.	Watson, M. L.
Tickle, G. W.	Watters, W. T.
Timmons, Woffard Colquitt	Way, P. T.
Tinnen, Robert G.	Way, S. H.
Toney, H. H.	Webster, J. A.
Townsend, L. R.	Weekley, Martin L.
Trollinger, Joseph	Wellons, James W.
Truett (Truitt), H. E.	Wellons, William Brock
Truitt, John Galloway	Wells, W. L.
Truitt, R. A.	West, A. A.
Truitt, Thomas	West, John
Tuck, R. C.	Wharton, J. M.
Tuck, Richard Claiborne	Wheeler, J.
Turner, James A.	Whidbee, J. B.
Turner, Stephen	White, E. B.
Tyler, Myron	White, Norfleet
Tyree, Z.	White, Philemon
Underhill, G. D.	White, T. E.
Underwood, George R.	Whiteman, J. A.
Underwood, Isaac T.	Whitley, Daniel
Upchurch, W. J.	Whitley, Jesse T.
Utley, Littlejohn	Whitley, Jospeh
Vass, Philip	Whitley, Randall
Veasey, B. H.	Whitten, Robert A.
Veasey, G. H.	Whitty, Daniel
Veasey, G. R.	Wicker, J. D.
Vickers, J. N.	Wicker, Walton Crump
Vickers, J. Y.	Wiggins, J. A.
Vuncannon, Henry	Wiggins, J. F.
Waldrop, S. R.	Wilder, Josiah
Walker, Abner	Williams, B. J.
Walker, G. K.	Williams, C. L.
Walker, George Garrison	Williams, Cornelius C.
Walker, H. W.	Williams, D. M.
Walker, James	Williams, H. W.
Walker, John	Williams, J. C.
Walker, S. G.	Williams, J. E.
Walker, Thomas William	Williams, Jeduthan
Walker, W. L.	Williams, M. L.
Walker, William T.	Williamson, Elijah
Wallace, John I.	Williamson, Francis
Wallis, Jonathan	Williamson, James
Walter, Isaac N.	Williamson, R. L.
Walters, W. T.	Willingham, J. W.
Ward, J. E.	Willingham, W. W.
Ward, John	Wilkins, George
Ward, Jonathan	Wilkinson, J.
Ward, Samuel	Wilkinson, W. D.

Wills, W. L.	Worley, Joshua
Wilson, Henry B.	Wright, Jackson H.
Wilson, T.	Wright, Samuel
Wilson, W.	Wright, T. F.
Winston, M. L.	Wyrick, L. L.
Wisener (Wisner), R. L.	Yarborough, D. R.
Witeman, J. A.	York, James P.
Wolf, George L.	Young, B. F.
Wolf (Wolfe), H. F.	Young, B. H.
Woods, G. M.	Young, Brutus
Woods, George W.	Zahn, John
Woodson, W. A.	

Licentiates Listed In 1930

Archer, W. N.	Nash, D. D.
Brittle, Richie Irvin	Parsons, D. T.
Chadwick, J. B.	Poore, Miss Sallie
Coble, R. H.	Shepherd, V. D.
Cox, H. V.	Smith, E. B.
Dickens, J. M.	Smith, R. O.
Dollar, Carl C.	Smith, W. S.
Fogleman, J. D.	Tally, George M.
Grissom, Raymond T.	Taylor, John
Harrod, J. T.	Terrell, W. B.
Henderson, John W.	Underwood, I. T.
Huber, Lester Ellsworth	Vickers, J. Y.
Hunt, G. S.	Walker, G. R.
Lowdermilk, B. H.	Willingham, W. W.
Mann, Alton B.	Wilson, S. B.
McKenney, D. T.	

Appendix B

Presidents of the Southern Christian Convention

(The dates given are the years of election to the office. Each official served until the election of his successor.)

1856	William Brock Wellons
1858	E. F. Watson
1860-1866	Convention inactive
1866	William Brock Wellons
1878	Solomon Apple, Vice President, presided over the 1878 session, as Wellons died in 1877.
1878	Jesse T. Whitley, elected in 1878, left the Christian Church during the same year.
1879	William Samuel Long
1886	William Wesley Staley
1900	Patrick Henry Fleming
1904	William Wesley Staley
1922	Leon Edgar Smith
1932	Stanley C. Harrell
1940	H. S. Hardcastle
1944	William E. Wisseman
1948	John Galloway Truitt
1952	W. Millard Stevens
1954	Jesse H. Dollar
1956	Martin T. Garren
1960	George D. Alley
1962	Joe A. French, as Vice President, began serving when Alley removed to Ohio in 1961, and was formally elected to the office in 1962.

Appendix C

Plan of Union of the Congregational and Christian Churches

As Adopted by the National Council of Congregational Churches at Detroit, June 3, 1929, and by The General Convention of the Christian Church at Piqua, Ohio, October 25, 1929

I. Sec. 1. That the National Council of the Congregational Churches and The General Convention of the Christian Church be united under the title of the General Council of the Congregational and Christian Churches (Unincorporated) looking toward complete union so soon as necessary legal steps can be taken, both national bodies to continue for the time being their organizations to meet legal requirements, while constituting the membership of the general organization. (Invitation is extended to other bodies to join this union. In the event of favorable action by one or more national bodies, it is agreed that a new and more inclusive name shall be chosen for the General Council.)

That the basis of this new relation shall be the recognition by each group that the other group is constituted of the followers of Jesus Christ. Each individual church and each group of churches shall be free to retain and develop its own form of expression. Finding in the Bible the supreme rule of faith and life, but recognizing that there is wide room for differences of interpretation among equally good Christians, this union shall be conditioned upon the acceptance of Christianity as primarily a way of life, and not upon uniformity of theological opinion or any uniform practice of ordinances.

Sec. 2. The purpose of the General Council shall be to perform on behalf of the united churches the various functions heretofore performed by the National Council for the Congregational churches and the General Convention for the Christian churches, it being understood that where technical legal questions may be involved the action of the separate bodies shall be secured.

That for the first four years the Moderator of the National Council and the President of the General Convention shall be co-ordinate presiding officers, their service to be arranged by mutual agreement; that for the time being the Secretary of the National Council and the Secretary of the General Convention, while continuing their respective positions, shall be Secretaries of the General Council under such division of responsibility as shall be determined by the General Council or its Executive Committee.

That regular meetings of the General Council be held biennially in the spring or early summer of odd numbered years, and that these be so arranged as that necessary business meetings of the National Council and of the General Convention may be held for legal action and other necessary business.

II. That pending possible mergers among themselves, the larger units (i.e. the five Regional and the Afro-Christian Conventions, the Congregational "State" Conferences), and after merger the united bodies, shall severally

be represented in the General Council by two delegates each, and each such Convention or Conference having churches whose aggregate membership is more than ten thousand shall be entitled to elect two additional delegates for each additional ten thousand members or major fraction thereof; provided that no conference with three or more churches shall be without representation.

III. That pending merger, local units (i.e. Christian conferences and Congregation district associations), and after merger the united bodies, be represented in the General Council on the basis of one delegate for every ten churches or major fraction thereof.

IV. That heads of church colleges and seminaries recognized by the General Council as affiliated with or co-operating with it, or with either communion, the National General Secretaries as defined in the by-laws and editors of national church periodicals, together with the officers of the general national body, be members *ex-officiis* of the General Council.

V. That in order to conserve legal interests the charter of The General Convention of the Christian Church and that of the Corporation for the National Council of Congregational Churches be continued in force unless and until it becomes possible and seems wise to combine them.

VI. That the voluntary declaration of the representatives of each communion to the effect that they and their work ought not to be a charge on the financial resources of the other be recognized as the general principle to govern in adjustment of financial obligations; that therefore for the time being the miscellaneous expenses of the General Council shall be pro-rated on the basis of the relative membership of the two denominations, and that the expenses incident to continuing any officer, service, or missionary enterprise now carried by either denomination, together with present indebtedness, shall be met from the resources of that fellowship. Here, however, the fact is taken into account that there may be natural shiftings of constituency from one denomination to the other, as also changes in the work to be done which will call for corresponding adjustments. It is recognized, however, that where the arrangement at the start is equitable the combined constituency can be trusted faithfully to care for the combined work without fear of discrimination. It is contemplated that during the period of transition savings in overhead expense are not to be expected, but that gradually such savings will result. It is hoped, however, that all will think of such economies as making more kingdom building possible rather than as lessening the challenge to the grace of giving.

VII. That the promotion of income for missionary and educational work be committed to a Commission on Missions of the General Council consisting of the members of the jointly elected official administrative mission boards (that is, for the Congregational churches, the Prudential Committee of the American Board and the Directors of the Home Board), nine members-at-large (of whom at least one shall be from the Christian constituency) and the two presiding officers and the two Secretaries of the General Council *ex-officiis*.

VIII. That the functions of the General Council comparable to those now performed by the Executive Committees of the National Council and of the General Convention not otherwise provided for, be committed to an Executive Committee of the General Council composed of the members of the Executive Committee of the National Council (16 members), together with the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the General Convention.

IX. That the functions of the Board of Missions of the Christian Convention in the foreign field and those of the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions be discharged by one body composed of identical members until such time as the Constituent corporations may be legally merged.

X. That the functions of the Board of Missions in the home field, the Board of Christian Education and the Board of Publications of the General Convention, and those of the group of societies known as the Congregational Home Boards, be discharged by one body composed of identical members until such time as the constituent corporations may be legally merged.

XI. It is conceived that during the transition the provisions of IX and X shall be worked out substantially as follows:

1. Until corporate merger can be effected the Board of Missions of the Christian Church shall by necessary action constitute the Prudential Committee of the American Board its agent for the conduct of foreign missionary work, exclusive of that in Porto Rico, and the American Board shall elect at least four members from the Christian constituency as full voting members of its Prudential Committee in the class of members-at-large.

2. That the Board of Missions, the Board of Christian Education, and the Board of Publications of the Christian churches shall by necessary action constitute the Board of Directors of the Congregational Home Boards, with its several Administrative Committees, their agents for home missions and church extension, Christian education and publication, and that at least four members from the Christian constituency be elected full voting members of the Board of Directors of the Home Board and a total of at least six members of the several Administrative Committees of the Home Board be elected from the Christian constituency, also two members of the Foundation for Education.

3. That Missionary Secretaries shall be appointed by the General Convention in such number as it may deem needful.

4. That the work of the Board of Missions of the Christian Convention in Porto Rico and at Franklinton College be transferred to the Administrative Committee serving the American Missionary Association, together with the resources for the maintenance of the same.

5. That agreeably with present practice responsibility for the work of home and foreign missions and church extension of the Afro-Christian Convention continue with that convention, its successor or successors, on the principle of self-supporting states among the Congregational churches.

XII. That the Christian Convention request the Administrative Committee on Ministerial Relief to further the cause of ministerial relief among the Christian churches with a view to bringing its ministry to a basis similar to that of the Congregational churches and in the hope of ultimate oneness of this work. Further, That whereas the Christian churches now give a certain amount of ministerial aid through local and regional conferences and understanding it to be the desire of the Christian churches to bring about as soon as possible national administration of ministerial aid, and that the Christian churches will welcome the leadership of the Administrative Committee on Ministerial Relief in perfecting an adequate plan for the aid of their own aged and retired ministers until such time as the merger shall become more nearly complete; and further,

That inasmuch as the Annuity Fund for Congregational Ministers seems to be legally forbidden to admit as members any except "Congregational" ministers, a movement be put on foot among the Christian churches to de-

velop plans under which benefits comparable to those available for Congregational ministers shall be provided for ministers of the Christian churches, utilizing the experience and good offices of the Congregational Ministerial Boards.

XIII. That of necessity trust funds and moneys given for specific purposes must be administered strictly in accordance with the terms of trusts and the intention of donors so far as expressed. And further,

That until complete unity can be worked out all other moneys contributed by either group of churches shall be administered for the established work of those churches unless otherwise determined by the donors.

XIV. That the present status of educational institutions with reference to their denominational bodies be preserved, and that where mergers of educational institutions are possible they be encouraged.

XV. That the General Council name a commission on evangelism and devotional life to consist of the members of the Commission on Evangelism of the National Council, twenty-four in number, plus three persons chosen from the Christian Church constituency. This commission shall promote a program of evangelism and devotional life in all the churches. With a view to conserving all spiritual values, the Commission on Evangelism of the National Council shall be wholly free to adapt the general program to the needs of the Congregational churches and the representatives of the Christian Church shall be equally free to do likewise for the Christian churches. The work for life service, for which the Board of Evangelism is now responsible in the Christian Church, shall be committed to the Student Life Department of the Home Board.

XVI. The work of the Board of Finance of the Christian Convention in the field of benevolence being committed to the Commission on Missions, its responsibility for the finances of the General Convention itself and its share of the expenses of the General Council may be retained or committed to the members of the Executive Committee of the General Council who represent the Christian constituency, as may be determined by the General Convention.

XVII. That the business of publishing be combined, as far as possible; that in particular a common year-book shall be issued in the immediate future on the general tabular scheme of the Congregational Year-Book, and that in this year-book, for the time being at least, all Churches be published together for a given State or district, with separate sub-headings in each schedule for the Christian and Congregational Churches, or with distinguishing marks as may be determined.

In case the Home Board, as constituted above, should deem it unwise to administer the Christian Publishing Association Building and printing plant in Dayton, Ohio, the General Convention shall be wholly free to make use of or dispose of this plant as it deems wise.

XVIII. That periodicals be merged as soon as the way is clear and to the extent found desirable. The *Herald of Gospel Liberty* and the *Congregationalist* may well be merged, possibly under a wholly new name. If, however, it should seem better to either group to continue indefinitely both periodicals, this may be done without breach of the spirit of unity, financial responsibility being carried by the respective constituencies.

XIX. That the Woman's Mission Board of the General Convention of the Christian Church shall be entirely free to determine its own course of action. The recommendation is strongly made, however, that its activities be applied to the whole program of the Church in co-operation with the woman's

organizations in the Congregational Church.

XX. That the appointment of bureaus and commissions be determined with the view of conserving all the recognized activities of both Churches.

XXI. That a similar policy apply to representation in interdenominational and other bodies.

XXII. That in view of the requirement that beneficiaries of the C.B.M.R. and members of the annuity fund for Congregational ministers must be Congregational ministers, ministerial ordination and standing be continued separately, but with the endeavor to reach common standards as soon as possible.

XXIII. That regional, State and local organizations of each denomination, being wholly self-determining, be free to continue as at present, with full fellowship in the General Council, but that conference with these bodies be had with a view to unification on lines comparable with the proposals for national union.

That in states or districts where the churches of one denomination are very few these might simply unite with the other body, retaining their name locally if desired; likewise, that in districts where the number is greater but still relatively quite few, these might be united with the other body as a unit, continuing their own name, as for example, the Christian Association of the Massachusetts Congregational Conference, thus retaining their denominational connection while uniting with the Congregationalists but without requiring the organization of a new state body. Likewise, for example, there could be the Congregational Conference in affiliation with the North Carolina Christian Convention or Conference.

Each local church may continue wholly unchanged in name and in organization. Any changes which seem wise may be made by the churches themselves, but it is recommended that the Joint Commission appoint an advisory commission, representative of the General Convention and the National Council, to assist conferences, associations, conventions, and churches on all matters involved in the readjustment of their organization, legal affairs, and programs in line with this plan of union, this commission to be empowered to appoint local commissions for such adjustments whenever and wherever occasion may cause and such advice be sought.

XXIV. That The General Convention of the Christian Church and the National Council of Congregational Churches be requested to act on the proposals at the earliest possible date; that so soon as these or other plans are approved by the two Commissions, constitution and by-laws for the General Council be drawn up, embodying the principles decided upon, these to be offered to the National Council and to the General Convention for consideration.

XXV. In conclusion, these plans and recommendations of necessity deal with legal and technical details, but they have their justification in the spirit of unity which they pre-suppose and are designated to promote. If a desire for that unity for which the Master once prayed be the actuating motive of all plans and all acts, the way will become clear, as we proceed, where now it may appear filled with uncertainties, hesitation, and hindrance. We may be sure that no legal entanglements will be too difficult, no ecclesiastical customs too deeply fixed, no sentiments seem too precious to yield, no ambitions or personal commitments too intense, if the will to achieve be ours and the Spirit of God lead us. Going forward, thus led, we may ourselves secure, and may make plain to others, the road to joyous fellowship and enlarged usefulness.

Appendix D

The footnotes are here reproduced substantially as in the edition of 1947, though it will be noted that those numbered 10 and 11 now require modification to be brought up to date.

BASIS OF UNION **of the Congregational Christian Churches** **and the** **Evangelical and Reformed Church** **with** **The Interpretations**

Preamble

We, the regularly constituted representatives of the Congregational Christian Churches and of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, moved by the conviction that we are united in spirit and purpose and are in agreement on the substance of the Christian faith and the essential character of the Christian life;

Affirming our devotion to one God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our membership in the holy catholic Church, which is greater than any single Church and than all the Churches together;

Believing that denominations exist not for themselves but as parts of that Church, within which each denomination is to live and labor and, if need be, die; and

Confronting the divisions and hostilities of our world, and hearing with a deepened sense of responsibility the prayer of our Lord "that they all may be one";

Do now declare ourselves to be one body, and do set forth the following articles of agreement as the basis of our life, fellowship, witness, and proclamation of the Gospel to all nations.

I. Name

The name of the Church formed by this union shall be UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST.¹

¹ If the name "United Church of Christ" seems presumptuous, it should be remembered that any good general name must seem so, since it would apply equally well to other groups. A name, however, quickly becomes a mere means of classification, and it is hoped that the world will soon come to know that the Churches uniting under this name do not pretend to be more than they actually are.

(The purpose of this and other footnotes in this instrument is purely explanatory. They are designed to throw light on the text, but are not part of the Basis of Union.)

This name expresses a fact: it stands for the accomplished union of two church bodies each of which has arisen from a similar union of two church bodies.² It also expresses a hope: that in time soon to come, by further union between this Church and other bodies, there shall arise a more inclusive United Church.

II. Faith

The faith which unites us and to which we bear witness is that faith in God which the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments set forth, which the ancient Church expressed in the ecumenical creeds, to which our own spiritual fathers gave utterance in the evangelical confessions of the Reformation, and which we are in duty bound to express in the words of our time as God Himself gives us light. In all our expressions of that faith we seek to preserve unity of heart and spirit with those who have gone before us as well as those who now labor with us.

In token of that faith we unite in the following confession,³ as embodying those things most surely believed and taught among us:

We believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator and Sustainer of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord and Saviour, who for us and our salvation lived and died and rose again and lives for evermore; and in the Holy Spirit, who takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us, renewing, comforting, and inspiring the souls of men.

We acknowledge one holy catholic Church, the innumerable company of those who, in every age and nation, are united by the Holy Spirit to God in Christ, are one body in Christ, and have communion with Him and with one another.

We acknowledge as part of this universal fellowship all throughout the world who profess this faith in Jesus Christ and follow Him as Lord and Saviour.

We hold the Church to be established for calling men to repentance and faith, for the public worship of God, for the confession of His name by word and deed, for the administration of the sacraments, for witnessing to the saving grace of God in Christ, for the upbuilding of the saints, and for the universal propagation of the Gospel; and in the power of the love of God in Christ we labor for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and the realization of human brotherhood.

Depending, as did our fathers, upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the consummation of the Kingdom of God; and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and for the life everlasting.

² A brief history of the two communions is planned for publication as soon as possible.

³ This confession expresses the content and meaning of the faith held generally by the members of the two uniting communions. It is not to be considered a substitute for any confession of faith which may be used in any congregation today. Like the ampler statement called for in Article IV, Section F, it is designed to be a testimony, and not a test, of faith.

III. Practice

A. The basic unit of organization of the United Church of Christ is the Congregation; that is, the local church.

B. The Congregations, through their ministers and through delegates elected from their membership, may organize Associations for fellowship, mutual encouragement, inspiration, and such other functions as may be desired.

C. The Congregations, through their ministers and through delegates elected from their membership, constitute Conferences for fellowship, counsel, and cooperation in all matters of common concern. The Conferences exist to make cooperation effective (a) among their Congregations and (b) between their Congregations and the General Synod, the Boards, commissions, agencies, and instrumentalities⁴ of the Church.

D. The Conferences, through delegates elected by them from the membership and ministers of the Congregations located within their respective bounds, constitute the General Synod.

E. Officers, Boards, councils, commissions, committees, departments, agencies, and instrumentalities are responsible to the bodies that elect them.

F. The government of the United Church is exercised through Congregations, Associations, Conferences, and the General Synod in such wise that the autonomy of each is respected in its own sphere, each having its own rights and responsibilities. This Basis of Union defines those rights and responsibilities in principle and the constitution which will be drafted after the consummation of the union shall further define them but shall in no wise abridge the rights now enjoyed by Congregations.

G. Individual communicants have the right of appeal, complaint, or reference to their Congregations, Associations, Conferences, and ultimately to the General Synod. Ministers, Congregations, Associations, and Conferences have similar rights of appeal, complaint, or reference. Decisions rendered in consequence of such appeals, complaints, or references are advisory, not mandatory.

H. Each Congregation, Association, and Conference has the right of retaining or adopting its own charter, constitution, by-laws, and other regulations which it deems essential and proper to its own welfare. This right includes the holding and operation of its own property.

I. The freedom of worship and of education at present enjoyed by the Congregations of the negotiating communions will be preserved in the United Church. Other freedoms at present enjoyed are not hereby abridged.

⁴ The Basis of Union employs both the word "agencies" and "instrumentalities" in order to meet legal requirements.

J. Men and women enjoy the same rights and privileges in the United Church. It is recommended that at least one third of the members of the national administrative bodies be women.

K. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the recognized sacraments of the Church.

IV. Functions of The General Synod

A. The General Synod shall initiate action for the preparation of a constitution of the United Church. This constitution shall be based upon the principles set forth in this Basis of Union. When prepared, it shall be submitted to the General Synod; and the General Synod shall declare it in

force when it shall have been ratified by not less than two thirds of the former Congregational Christian churches voting, and by not less than two thirds of the former Evangelical and Reformed Synods.

B. The General Synod shall elect its officers and assign them their duties.

C. The General Synod, directly or through an executive committee, commissions, and other committees, shall carry on the general work of the Church which is now conducted by the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches and the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church; and through the instrumentality of Boards, commissions, and other organizations as needed, shall meet the responsibilities of the Church for foreign missions, home missions, education, publication, the ministry and ministerial relief, evangelism, stewardship, social action, and institutional benevolence.

D. The General Synod shall have power to receive overtures and petitions; to give counsel in regard to cases referred to it; and to maintain correspondence with other communions.

E. The General Synod shall promote the reorganization of Conferences, Associations, and Synods into Conferences and Associations which shall be constituted on a territorial basis and enjoy a status similar to that of the former Conferences, Associations, and Synods. This reorganization shall be effected by the Conferences, Associations, and Synods concerned, with the counsel and confirmation of the General Synod.⁵

F. If and when the Basis of Union is regularly adopted, the General Synod shall appoint a commission composed of an equal number of representatives of the two uniting communions to prepare a statement of faith based in principle upon Article II of this document, which shall be submitted for approval to the General Synod, Conferences, Associations, and Congregations. This statement shall be regarded as a testimony, and not as a test, of faith.

G. The General Synod shall meet in regular sessions, determine their time, place, frequency, and program, and provide for extraordinary sessions as may be necessary.

H. The executive committee of the General Synod shall be called the Executive Council. Its function shall correspond to those of the present Executive Committee of the Congregational Christian General Council and of the present General Council of the Evangelical and Reformed General Synod. While it shall not be charged with the administration of the Boards and other agencies and instrumentalities of the communion, it shall be its duty to consider their work, to prevent duplication of activities, to effect all possible economies of administration, to correlate the work of the several organizations, including their publicity and promotional activities, so as to secure the maximum of efficiency with the minimum of expense. It shall have the right to examine the annual budgets of the several national organizations and have access to their books and records. It shall make report of its actions to the

⁵ It is expected that the Conferences and Synods will take the first steps necessary to this reorganization as soon as practicable after the consummation of the union, forming non-competitive units without overlapping boundaries capable of continuing all the work carried on by the present Conferences and Synods, together with such other work as may prove to be desirable. The formation of Associations, as deemed advisable, would follow.

General Synod at each stated meeting of that body and present to that Synod such recommendations as it may deem wise for the furtherance of the efficiency and economical administration of the several organizations. It shall study the relative needs of these organizations, including the Conferences, and recommend the apportionment percentages for the distribution of benevolent contributions.

I. For the interim between the effecting of the union and the adoption of the constitution, the membership of the Executive Council shall be twenty-four, with equal representation of the uniting communions.⁶

J. This Executive Council shall have a budget under its control, with income for it derived from the present sources of revenue of the General Council of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Executive Committee of the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches. It shall carry out faithfully all obligations of both of these bodies and conserve as separate funds all funds of both bodies until otherwise provided.

K. There shall be a central receiving treasury for all funds contributed to the General Synod and all the national agencies and instrumentalities. Each Conference will decide whether its Congregations shall be encouraged to send their moneys for these organizations direct to the central treasury or through the Conference treasurers.

L. No attempt will be made to set up a detailed plan for the solicitation, collection, and disbursement of missionary, benevolent, and administrative funds before the union is effected, but the General Synod shall be requested at its first meeting to appoint a special committee adequately representing all interests to deal with these matters and to report at a later date. In any plan it is understood:

1. That all property rights and trust funds shall be scrupulously protected as provided in Article IX, Sections A and C, of the Basis of Union.
2. That an adequate budgetary system will be established which will be voluntary in character on the part of the Congregations, Associations, Conferences, and Synods but in which due emphasis will be placed on the moral responsibility of all to support the general work of the Church.

M. Pending the report of the committee to be appointed by the General Synod and until new policies are adopted, present practices in apportionment allocations, per capita assignments, and kindred matters shall be maintained.

N. The choice of location of headquarters for the United Church of Christ shall be left until after the union is effected.

V. Conferences, Associations, and Synods

Until, according to Article IV, Section E, it is otherwise determined, the Conferences, Associations, and Synods shall continue; and each shall conduct its business in its own way. Whatever action is submitted to them by the General Synod shall be disposed of in the same way as these bodies respectively disposed of such action by the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches or the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church prior to the union.

⁶ Paragraphs describing arrangements for the interim between the consummation of the union and the adoption of the constitution, while constituting part of the Basis of Union, are printed in smaller type to distinguish them from the rest of the text.

VI. Ministers and Congregations

A. The ministers of the two communions shall be enrolled as ministers of the United Church. Candidates for the ministry, after the union, and until a standard method is provided by the constitution, shall have the same status, and be licensed or ordained as ministers by the Associations or Conferences and Synods in the same way, as before the union. The standard method shall provide for ordination by authorization of the Conference or Association and normally upon the call to a Congregation. Similarly the formal induction of a minister into his parish, which is recommended as normal procedure, shall be by authority of the Conference or Association at the request of the Congregation.

B. A minister of another denomination shall not be accepted by any body of the United Church in which ministerial standing is held without recommendation from the body to which he belongs; if, however, a denomination refuses to recommend a minister in good and regular standing, he may be accepted after proper examination by the Conference or Association in which his standing would be held.

C. The calling of a minister to a Congregation is a concern of the church at large, represented in the Association or Conference, as well as of the minister and the Congregation. Ministers and churches desiring to maintain a system of pastoral placement in which the Conference or Association shall have little or no part, shall be free to do so; but the recommended standard of denominational procedure shall be one in which the minister, Congregation, and Conference or Association cooperate, the Conference or Association approving candidates, the Congregation extending and the ministers accepting the call. The new communion will appeal to all Congregations not to call or dismiss their ministers, and to all ministers not to respond to calls or resign, until the Association or Conference shall have given approval. In all relationships between minister and local church or Congregation, the freedom of the minister and the autonomy of the church are presupposed.

VII. Members

All persons who are members of either communion at the time of the union shall be members of the United Church. Men, women, and children shall be admitted into the fellowship of the United Church through baptism and profession of faith according to the custom and usage of each congregation prior to the union. When they shall have been admitted they shall be recognized as members of the United Church.

VIII. Organization of Boards

[This article has been ratified (subject to the adoption of the entire Basis of Union by the negotiating communions) by the Executive Committee of the Congregational Christian General Council, by the Evangelical and Reformed General Council, and severally by the governing authorities of all Boards, agencies, and instrumentalities involved.]

A. The Boards, commissions, and other agencies and instrumentalities shall proceed to correlate their work under the General Synod as rapidly as their charters, constitutions, property rights, the effectiveness of their pro-

gram, and the laws of the State will permit. In the original personnel of the Boards, commissions, and other agencies and instrumentalities, when consolidated, due representation shall be given to each of the consolidating communions.

B. At each regular meeting of the General Synod each Board and commission shall submit for review a report of its operations during the time elapsed since the last regular meeting of the General Synod.

C. Except in the case of the Pension Board, the members of the Boards shall be nominated and elected by the General Synod. They shall be represented through corresponding members, with voice but without vote, in the General Synod itself. They shall elect their own officers. The executive committees or other governing groups of the Boards shall have a sufficient number of members to provide for geographical distribution, representation of both of the uniting Churches (*see Section A above*), and the inclusion of persons qualified to render specific services, as for example in the field of investment, medicine, education, etc., as the Boards may require.

D. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the Board of International Missions shall be united under the name of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.⁷

1. The Board thus constituted shall from the time of the consummation of the union until the adoption of a constitutional plan of organization consist of two hundred and twenty-five members, one hundred and thirteen of whom shall be chosen from the Evangelical and Reformed Church and one hundred and twelve from the Congregational Christian Churches, all to be elected by the General Synod of the United Church. One third of these members shall be women.
2. This body is smaller than the present Congregational Christian Board and larger than the present Evangelical and Reformed Board. Through its members its work will be related to the Conferences and Congregations. The traveling expenses of members incurred in connection with meetings will be borne in part by the Board and in part by the members themselves. It is believed that the additional interest and effectiveness in promoting the program resulting from these large group meetings will immeasurably outweigh the cost involved in the proposed plan of organization.
3. On the adoption of a constitution and by-laws for the United Church, the term of office of all Board members elected under these provisions shall terminate on the date designated by the General Synod for their successors to take office under the permanent plan of organization of the Boards.
4. Among the duties of this Board shall be the following:
 - a. To receive and consider the reports of the board of directors (*See Paragraph 5 following*) and the executive officers and to give them any necessary directives.
 - b. To determine long-range policies to be adopted by the Board.
 - c. To nominate and elect the general officers of the Board, the members of the board of directors, and the executive officers.
 - d. To report fully to the General Synod of the United Church concerning operations and finances of the Board (*see Section B above*).
5. The Board shall elect forty-five members who, with five persons *ex officio*, shall serve as a board of directors. The members *ex officio* shall be the President and the two Vice-Presidents of the Board and the two highest administrative officers of the General Synod of the United Church.

E. The homeland Boards, agencies, and instrumentalities of the Congregational Christian Churches and of the Evangelical and Reformed Church,

exclusive of the Pension Board and the agencies for social action, from the time of the consummation of the union until the adoption of a constitutional plan for their organization, shall function by means of a single corporate body. The name of this corporate body shall be the Board for Home Missions of the United Church of Christ. In order to provide the appropriate corporate structure for this enlarged and consolidated work, the charter of The Board of Home Missions of the Congregational and Christian Churches shall be amended so that it may be used for this purpose.

Corporate Membership

1. There shall be two hundred and twenty-five corporate members of the Board for Home Missions of the United church of Christ elected by the General Synod of the Church.⁸
2. These corporate members shall represent the United Church of Christ in the promotion and administration of the work of home missions. The term "home missions" as here used shall include the founding, support, and building of churches, education, educational institutions, publication, ministerial relief, evangelism, stewardship, institutional benevolence, and other home services.
3. They shall elect a board of directors as hereinafter provided.
4. They shall meet periodically, but at least annually, to review the proceedings of the board of directors, to study the status of the work of home missions, and to plan for its further development. In the interim between meetings they shall be alert to inform themselves as to the progress of the work and shall individually seek opportunity to bring the work to the attention of the Congregations and members of the United Church of Christ.
5. The corporate members shall give careful consideration to all recommendations from the General Synod or its Executive Council, and in the field of home missions, as defined above, shall have responsibility for determining matters of promotion, administration, and policy.
6. The terms of these corporate members shall be six years and they shall be elected in three classes of seventy-five each, one class being elected every second year at the regular biennial meeting of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. At the first meeting of the General Synod of the United Church, the two hundred and twenty-five persons shall be divided into three classes of seventy-five each, one class designated to serve two years, one class designated to serve four years, and one class designated to serve six years; provided however that, on the adoption of a constitution and by-laws for the United Church, the term of office of all Board members elected under these provisions shall terminate on the date designated by the General Synod for their successors to take office under the permanent plan of organization of the Boards. This paragraph is subject to amendment if it is decided that the General Synod shall meet otherwise than biennially.
7. In order that there may be continuity of operation during the years of reorganization the first list of corporate members shall include persons who are members of the Boards, agencies, and instrumentalities of the two uniting bodies at the time the union is consummated, as follows:

⁷ It is the intention of the present American Board to amend its Charter and By-Laws to conform to those of the Board of the United Church.

Members of the Board of National Missions of the Evangelical and Reformed Church	14
Members of the Board of Christian Education and Publication of the Evangelical and reformed Church	12
Members of the Commission on Evangelism of the Evangelical and Reformed Church	10
Members of the Board of Business Management of the Evangelical and Reformed Church	12
Members of the Commission on Benevolent Institutions of the Evangelical and Reformed Church (excepting the representatives appointed by the institutions)	4
Members of the Commission on Higher Education of the Evangelical and Reformed Church (excepting the Presidents of Colleges)	12
Forty-eight persons elected at large from the membership of the Evangelical and Reformed Church	48
Sub-total	112
The President, three Vice-Presidents and thirty-six other members of the Board of Directors of The Board of Home Missions of the Congregational and Christian Churches	40
Members of the Commission on Evangelism of the Congregational Christian Churches (excluding the four persons elected to the Commission by The Board of Home Missions)	12
Three persons designated by the association of Congregational Christian Colleges	3
Fifty-eight persons elected at large from the membership of the Congregational Christian Churches	58
Sub-total	113
TOTAL	225

8. The particular class to which each individual belongs will be indicated by the General Synod at the time of election.

Board of Directors

9. The board of directors, as constituted at the time of union, shall consist of the Chairman and the two Vice-Chairmen of the Board for Home Missions of the United Church of Christ, the two highest administrative officers of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, and forty-five members who shall be chosen from and elected by the corporate members of the Board for Home Missions. At least one third of those elected shall be women.
10. In order that all interests may be represented, the first board of directors shall be nominated by a joint committee composed of an equal number of persons to be designated in advance by the appropriate bodies of the uniting communions.
11. Of the first board of directors, twenty-four shall be chosen from the Evangelical and Reformed Church and twenty-four from the Congregational Christian Churches.

⁸ Note that this Board, in size and structure, parallels and complements the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (see Article VIII, Section D, Paragraph 1).

12. The board of directors shall immediately elect committees as follows:
 - a. An executive committee composed of thirteen persons, among whom shall be the chairman of the board of directors and the chairmen of the divisional committees. At least four of this committee shall be women.

This executive committee shall exercise such powers as are conferred upon it from time to time by the board of directors.

- b. An investment committee consisting of five members, including the Treasurer, at least three of whom shall be members of the board of directors, who shall have power to invest and reinvest the funds of the corporation, or trust funds held by them, and to select investments and reinvestments of the said funds, and to change the investments of such funds, and such other powers as may be given them by the Board.
 - c. Such divisional committees⁹ which specialize in the founding, support, and building of churches, education, educational institutions, publication, ministerial relief, evangelism, stewardship, institutional benevolence, and other home services, as the interests of the work require, who shall have such powers as may be given them by the directors.
 - d. Such other standing committees as the interests of the work require, who shall have such powers as may be given them by the directors.

F. The Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches shall be united under the name, the Council for Christian Social Action.

Membership

1. From the time of the consummation of the union of the communions until the adoption of a constitutional plan of organization, there shall be twenty-four members of the Council for Christian Social Action elected by the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. Of the first members of the Council, twelve shall be chosen from the Evangelical and Reformed Church and twelve from the Congregational Christian Churches. The terms of these members shall be six years and they shall be elected in classes of eight each, one class being elected every second year at the regular biennial meeting of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. At the first meeting of the General Synod of the United Church, the twenty-four persons shall be divided into three classes of eight each, one class designated to serve two years, one class designated to serve four years and one class designated to serve six years. On the adoption of a constitution and by-laws for the United Church, the term of office of all Council members elected under these provisions shall terminate on the date designated by the General Synod for their successors to take office under the permanent plan of organization. This paragraph is subject to amendment, if it is decided that the General Synod shall meet otherwise than biennially.

Division of Christian Education — continuing

CC Division of Christian Education

ER Board of Christian Education and Publication (education and curricular editorial functions only)

ER Commission on Higher Education

⁹ It is at present believed that the Board for Home Missions will require the following Divisions in order to care for all the interests involved:

ER College and Seminary interests

CC College and Seminary interests

Certain aspects of the higher education interests to be lodged with a College-Seminary Council composed of representatives of the Division of Christian Education, the American Missionary Association Division, and of the Colleges and Seminaries.

Division of Ministerial Relief — continuing

ER Relief functions of the Board of Pensions and Relief

CC Division of Ministerial Relief

Division of Evangelism and Church Extension — continuing

CC Church Extension Division

CC Commission on Evangelism

ER Board of National Missions

ER Commission on Evangelism

American Missionary Association Division — continuing

CC American Missionary Association Division

Division of Publication — continuing

CC Pilgrim Press Division

ER Board of Business Management

The Division of Publication (*continuing the Pilgrim Press Division and the Board of Business Management*) will proceed forthwith to develop and recommend particularly to the board of directors of the Board for Home Missions a plan for consolidating and unifying the publication and merchandising interests of the United Church.

2. The Council for Christian Social Action may choose as advisory members, with voice but not vote, representatives of other Boards, agencies and conferences, and of the men's, women's and youth fellowships.

Committees

3. The Council for Christian Social Action shall immediately elect such standing committees as the interests of the work require. They shall have such powers as shall be given to them by the Council.

Functions

4. The Council for Christian Social Action shall be an agency under the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, and shall have power to take over, unify, and operate the activities carried on by the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Staff

5. The Director and other staff members shall be elected by the Council for Christian Social Action.

G. The pension activities of the United Church shall be administered by one corporation, the name of which shall be left for later decision by mutual agreement. It is here referred to as the MERGED FUND.

1. Provision shall be made in the by-laws of the Merged Fund whereby the General Synod of the United Church shall from time to time make examinations of the practices and developments of the Merged Fund.
2. The Trustees shall be chosen from eligible persons whose names have been presented to and approved by the General Synod of the United Church.

3. The Merged Fund shall be a non-profit membership corporation in which control lies in the members of the Fund through a Board of Trustees, elected by the members. Congregations and other employing agencies shall be included as participating members.
4. The maximum annuity¹⁰ provided by the Pension Fund of the Evangelical Synod, the Sustentation Fund of the Reformed Church, and the Original Plan of the Annuity Fund for Congregational Ministers (hereafter referred to in this statement as the three "original plans") shall be in each case \$500.00.
5. The liability of the Merged Fund to the members of the three "original plans" shall be set up on the books of the new corporation for the funded portion of their respective annuities only.
6. Sufficient money shall be designated in advance by the United Church as a prior claim upon apportionment to meet the indicated annual requirements for the unfunded portion of the annuities under all three "original plans" and to make cumulative provision for their funding.
7. This prior claim upon the apportionment¹¹ shall be for not less than \$500,000 in each year in which the apportionment giving of the United Church for the year immediately preceding equals or exceeds \$3,300,000. The prior claim may be proportionately reduced in any year in which the apportionment giving for the preceding year is less than \$3,300,000, but the prior claim shall in no case be for less than an amount sufficient to meet the requirements of the year in question for the unfunded portion of the annuities under all three "original plans" plus the necessary expense of promotion and administration. The prior claim upon the apportionment shall continue until the total liabilities of the three "original plans" are completely funded.¹²
8. Liability for payment of the unfunded portion of "original plan" annuities in any year shall be limited to the money received as applicable to such unfunded portion. In the event that in any year there shall not be sufficient money to pay the annuities which the denomination has designated, the legal liability of the Merged Fund shall be completely satisfied and fulfilled when such applicable money as is available has been disbursed to the "Original plan" annuitants.
9. The assets and liabilities in the Merged Fund pertaining to members of the Ministers' Retirement Annuity Fund of the Evangelical and Re-

¹⁰ By "maximum annuity" is meant the annuity paid to a member who has completed the full term of service or membership defined by the rules of the fund to which he belongs. The annuity of a member who has completed less than the full term of service or membership is a percentage of the maximum, stipulated by the rules of the fund in question. The annuity of the widow of a member of any of the "original plans" shall be 60% of the annuity to which her husband would be entitled.

¹¹ In 1945 the amounts received from apportionment of the two denominations for similar purposes were as follows:

From the Evangelical and Reformed Churches	\$210,741
From the Congregational Christian Churches	117,025
Total	\$327,766

This amount does not include \$176,846 contributed by the Congregational Christian Churches through the Unit Plan.

¹² It is estimated that the time required to fund the "Original Plan" annuities upon the above basis will be approximately thirty years

formed Church and of the Expanded Plan of the Annuity Fund for Congregational Ministers shall be consolidated as completely as legal requirements and considerations of equity permit.

10. Ministers enrolling in the Merged Fund other than those who are members of one of the present plans at the time of the union, shall be received under a new form of certificate.
11. The assets received by the Merged Fund from the present funds shall all be pooled into a common unit of investment and, together with investment of future receipts, shall be collectively available from time to time to meet the liabilities of the various Departments of the Merged Fund. No particular assets shall be segregated against the balance in any particular fund, except for conditional gift accounts and other accounts which may be required to be segregated by law.

Pilgrim Memorial Fund Income

12. In the operation of the Merged Fund the Pilgrim Memorial Fund¹⁸ Income received in any year shall be allocated in the succeeding year in the following manner:
 - a. A specific sum determined before the merger shall be allocated to the Original Plan of the Annuity Fund.
 - b. A further specific sum determined before the merger shall be allocated to the Merged Fund to meet the expenses incurred in the operation of the Original Plan of the Annuity Fund.
 - c. An amount determined from year to year shall be allocated to the Merged Fund to meet the expenses incurred on account of Congregational Christian members of the consolidated "expanded plan."
 - d. Such an amount shall be allocated for the benefit of the members of the Expanded Plan of the Annuity Fund as shall provide \$45 for each unit sharer among the members of such Expanded Plan, according to the rules of the Annuity Fund, or as nearly this amount as can be provided after allocations a, b, and c have been made.
 - e. Any balance after the above four allocations shall be used for the strengthening of the whole Merged Fund, or in such manner as the Trustees believe most beneficial for the benefit of ministerial members of the Merged Fund and their families who do not fall within the four following categories:
 - I. Congregational Original Plan members
 - II. Evangelical Pension Fund members
 - III. Reformed Sustentation Fund members
 - IV. Congregational Christian Expanded Plan members
 - f. If allocations under heading e shall exceed \$45.00 per member, members under heading d shall be entitled to further allocation.
13. The pension boards of the two denominations shall give careful attention to the continuance and extension of a plan to provide retirement income for lay workers of the churches and other organizations of the United Church.

¹⁸ The Pilgrim Memorial Fund, consisting of about \$5,500,000, is an endowment fund held for the benefit of The Annuity Fund for Congregational Ministers, the income of which is at present used for the administrative expenses of the Annuity Fund and the benefit of its members.

IX. Legal Obligations

A. The property rights of all bodies such as Congregations, Associations, Conferences, Synods, and corporations shall be scrupulously observed.

B. The theological seminaries, colleges, academies, denominational boards, benevolent institutions, and other corporations shall be controlled under the terms of their respective charters and other governing documents. Those institutions, however, which were under the supervision of the national bodies of the uniting communions shall, at least until the constitution is adopted, pass under the supervision of the General Synod. While they are under the supervision of the General Synod, the interests of the previously supervising groups shall be properly recognized.

C. Due protection shall be given all trust funds, including pension funds.

X. Approval and Implementation of The Basis of Union

A. The Basis of Union shall be submitted to the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches and the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Each shall proceed according to its own polity in the approval or disapproval of the Basis of Union. When the Basis has been approved by the regular action of the two bodies, each shall designate an equal number of its membership, approximately three hundred, with power to represent it at a joint meeting which shall constitute the first meeting of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

B. The joint meeting being duly called and assembled, to it the final report of the action of the communions upon the Basis of Union shall be made; and by joint resolution it shall be declared that the union of the communions is effected at that time, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ being the successor to the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches and the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, the joint meeting becoming the first meeting of the General Synod of the United Church. Then the delegates shall be led in a constituting prayer, effect an organization by the election of officers, and proceed to the transaction of business. From the time of the organization of the General Synod of the United Church until a constitution of the United Church has been adopted, this Basis of Union shall regulate the business and affairs of the United Church.

C. At the joint session referred to in the foregoing paragraph when the Union shall be formally effected, such action shall be taken as will unite the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches and the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church: the further union of Conferences, Associations, Synods, and other bodies within the uniting communions shall proceed with the approval of the groups concerned, according to the principles laid down in this basis of Union.

D. The General Synod of the United Church of Christ at its first meeting shall also take any and all appropriate steps necessary to insure the continuity and to effect the consolidation of the Boards, commissions, and other agencies and instrumentalities as described in Article IV, Section C, and to make effective an interim plan for their consolidation and operation, as more explicitly set forth in Article VIII.

E. The General Synod at its first meeting shall be made up of representatives elected as set forth in Article X, Section A; but at subsequent meetings, until a constitution shall have been adopted, the General Synod shall be composed of delegates elected by the present Conferences and Synods, or their

successors, one delegate representing each three thousand communicants or major fraction thereof, so that the total number will be about six hundred.

F. Upon the consummation of the union the general officers of the former Congregational Christian General Council and the former Evangelical and Reformed General Synod not connected with the Boards shall become the staff of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ until other arrangements are perfected by the General Synod.

G. Revisions and amendments of the constitution shall be made by the General Synod and ratified by the Conferences in collaboration with the Associations and Congregations.

XI. Revisions and Amendments

Revisions and amendments of the Basis of Union while it is in force before the adoption of a constitution may be made by consent of ninety per cent of the members of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ duly assembled.

The Interpretations of The Basis of Union

(a) The Basis of Union calls for a union of the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches and the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church to form the General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

(b) The constitution for the United Church of Christ provided for in Article IV-A of the Basis of Union: (1) will not come into force until it has been ratified by two-thirds of our churches voting; (2) is to be based on the principles set forth in the Basis of Union; (3) is in no wise to abridge the rights now enjoyed by the churches; (4) will define and regulate as regards the General Synod but describe the free and voluntary relationships which the churches, associations, and conferences shall sustain with the General Synod and with each other.

(c) The Basis of Union calls for a union of the Boards of Home Missions, the Boards of Foreign Missions, the Annuity Boards, the Councils for Social Action, and similarly all related Boards, commissions, agencies, and instrumentalities of the two denominations.

(d) Churches, associations, conferences and the General Synod, being self-governing fellowships, possess autonomy in their own spheres, which autonomy is acknowledged and will be respected.

(e) Synods, conferences, associations and churches are to retain their present status until they are united by their own action and when mutually agreeable.

(f) Congregational Christian churches do not go out of existence at the time of the union of the two communions. In consummating this union the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church are uniting without break in their respective historic continuities.

(g) The United Church of Christ will be a union of two denominations joined in fellowship and cooperation without involving any invasion of the rights now enjoyed by local churches or congregations.

(h) With the constituting of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches [and the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church] will remain in existence in order to fulfill necessary legal functions, but shall transfer to the General Synod all of its functions which do not for legal reasons need to be retained.

Appendix E*

The General Council of Congregational Christian Churches and the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church Become

The General Synod of the United Church of Christ

With pageantry and drama befitting the occasion, two Protestant denominations of widely different heritage became one at Cleveland, Ohio, June 25, 1957. After fifteen years of conferring, voting and planning, the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches and the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church officially became the General Synod of the United Church of Christ in a beautiful and impressive ceremony.

At seven-thirty Tuesday evening, June 25, some five hundred officials, delegates and representatives of the Evangelical and Reformed Church joined a similar number of representatives of Congregational Christian Churches and marched in a colorful ecclesiastical procession through downtown Cleveland to the Municipal Music Hall. Sharing places of honor in the procession were the cross of the Christian church, a Bible, the Christian flag and flags of the eighteen countries where the two churches have missionary work.

The solemn opening of the Bible at eight o'clock signalled the convening of the Uniting Synod, which proceeded with the following Program:

The call to order by Reverend James E. Wagner, President of Evangelical and Reformed Church

A Hymn—The Church's One Foundation

The Invocation by the Reverend Fred Hoskins, Minister and Secretary of the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches

Appointment of Secretaries Pro Tem

Official Report on Evangelical and Reformed approval of the basis of union with interpretations by The Reverend Sheldon E. Mackey

Official report on Congregation Christian Approval on the basis of union with interpretations by The Reverend Fred S. Buschmeyer

Official report on Evangelical and Reformed Actions Authorizing the Call and Meeting of the United General Synod by The Reverend Sheldon E. Mackey

Official Report on Congregational Christian Actions Authorizing the Call and Meeting of the Uniting General Synod by The Reverend Fred S. Buschmeyer

Report of the Credentials Committee

Presentation and Action on Joint Resolution declaring the Basis of Union with Interpretations Adopted and the Union in Effect by the Reverend Fred S. Buschmeyer

The Uniting Prayer by The Reverend Douglas Horton

Silent Meditation and Dedication

Presentation of Symbols

The Cross

The Bible

Chalice and Paten

Baptismal Font

Flags and Banners

Hymn—Beneath the Cross of Jesus

Hymn—O Word of God Incarnate

Hymn—According to Thy Gracious Word

Hymn—Breathe On Me, Breath of God

Hymn—Fling Out the Banner!

Formal Declaration of the Union

The Secretary and Minister of the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches and the President of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, clasping their right hands in symbol of the fellowship of their respective communions and their oneness in Christ, proceeded as follows:

President Wagner: Constrained by the apostolic injunction "to lead a life worthy of the calling to which (we) have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"; and rejoicing in the assurance that "there is one body and one Spirit, just as (we) were called to the one hope that belongs to (our) call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all"; (Ephesians 4:1-5)

Secretary Hoskins: "Moved by the conviction that we are united in spirit and purpose and are in agreement on the substance of the Christian faith and the essential character of the Christian life; affirming our devotion to one God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our membership in the holy catholic Church, which is greater than any single Church and than all the Churches together; believing that denominations exist not for themselves but as parts of that Church, within which each denomination is to live and labor and, if need be, die; and confronting the divisions and hostilities of our world, and hearing with a deepened sense of responsibility the prayer of our Lord that they all may be one; as thou, Father, are in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me'." (St. John 17:21)

The Delegates Speaking in Unison: We do now, as the regularly constituted representatives of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and of the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches, declare ourselves to be one body and our union consummated in this act establishing the United Church of Christ, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

Secretary Hopkins: "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love."

President Wagner: "The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above."

The Congregation (singing): "Blest Be the Tie That Binds"

The Scripture Reading

Old Testament, Jeremiah 31:31-34 by The Reverend Wm. J. Faulkner

Epistle, 1 Corinthians 12: 12, 27-31 by The Reverend J.R.C. Haas

Gospel, Matthew 16:13-19 by The Reverend Wm. J. Faulkner

The Prayers

Almighty God, whose glory the heavens are telling, the earth thy power, and the sea thy might, and whose greatness all feeling and thinking creatures everywhere proclaim; to thee belongeth glory, honour, power, and love, now and for ever, and unto ages of ages: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty and most merciful God, we acknowledge and confess that we have sinned against thee in thought, word, and deed; that we have not loved thee with all our heart and soul, with all our mind and strength; and that we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We beseech thee, O God, to be forgiving of what we have been, to help us to amend what we are, and of thy mercy to direct what we shall be; so that henceforth we may walk in the way of thy commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in thy sight: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we, thine unworthy servants, do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us, and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful; and that we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

O Almighty God, whose dearly beloved Son after His resurrection sent His apostles into all the world, and on the Day of Pentecost endued them with special gifts of the Holy Spirit, that they might gather in the spiritual harvest: We beseech Thee to look down from heaven upon the fields now white unto the harvest, and to send forth more laborers to gather fruit unto eternal life. And grant us grace so to help them with our prayers and offerings that, when the harvest of the earth is ripe and the time for reaping is come, we, together with them, may rejoice before Thee according to the joy in harvest; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty and everliving God, who by the holy apostle hast taught us to make prayers and supplications, and to give thanks for all men; we humbly implore thee most mercifully to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto thy divine Majesty; beseeching thee to inspire continually the universal church with the Spirit of truth, unity, and concord: and grant that all they that do confess thy holy name may agree in the truth of thy holy word, and live in unity and godly love. We beseech thee also to save and defend thy servant the President of the United States; that under him we may be godly and quietly governed; and grant unto all in authority, that they may truly and indifferently minister justice, to the suppression of wickedness and vice, and to the maintainence of thy true religion and virtues. Give Grace (O Heavenly Father) to all ministers, that they may both by their life and doctrines set forth thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy sacraments; and to all thy people give thy heavenly grace; and especially to this congregation here present; that with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy word; truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. And we most humbly beseech thee of thy goodness (O Lord) to comfort and succour all them which in this life be in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. Grant this, O Father,

for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen
(*In Unison*)

Almighty God who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that where two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests; Fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life ever-lasting. Amen.

Anthem

Addresses by The Reverend James E. Wagner and The Reverend Fred Hoskins

Offering—Presentation With Doxology

Hymn—God of Years, Thy Love Hath Led Us

Benediction by The Reverend Wm. J. Faulkner

Organ Postlude

*From *The Christian Sun* July 15, 1957.

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